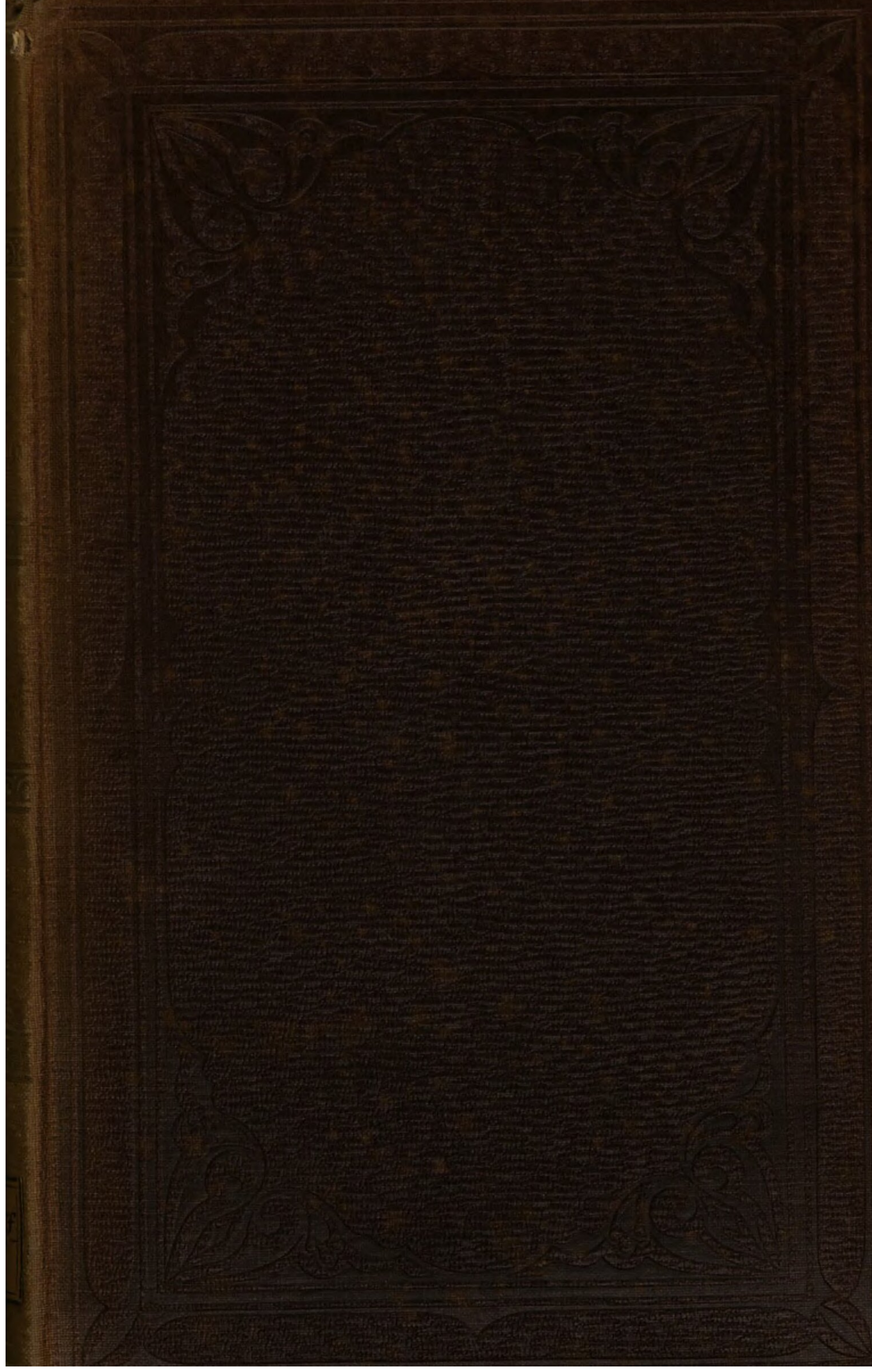




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METAPHYSICS

FRANCIS BACON

THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING
OF THE TRUTH AND ASSESSMENT OF THE
HUMAN REASON
OF THE REASONABLE MAN

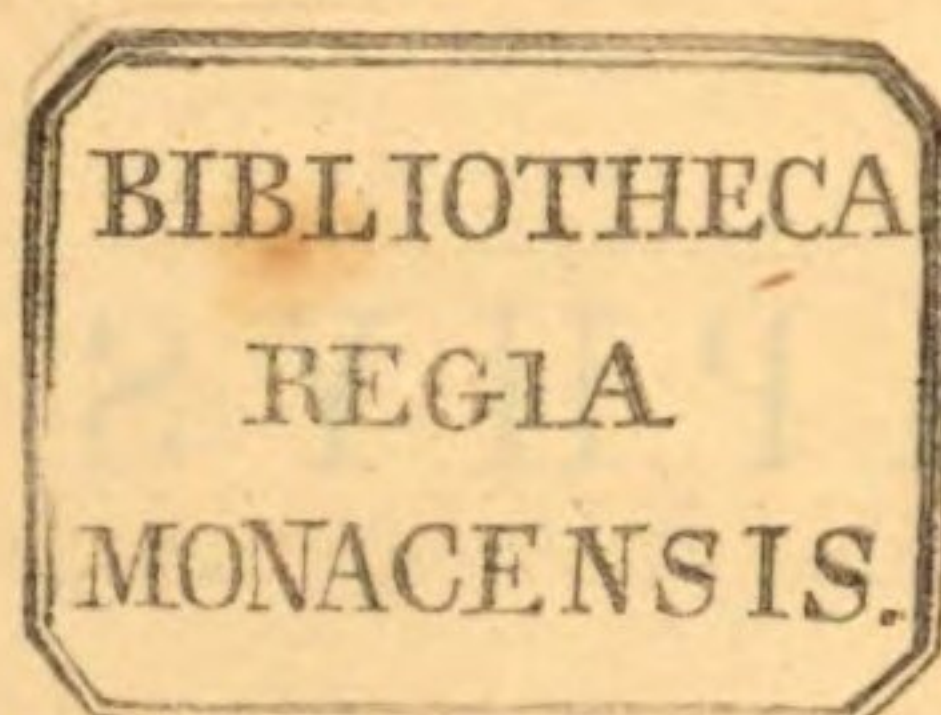
MEMOIR
OF A
METAPHYSICIAN.

BY
FRANCIS DRAKE, ESQUIRE.

EDITED
BY THE AUTHOR OF "BEGINNINGS OF A NEW SCHOOL OF METAPHYSICS;" "A LETTER
TO DR. WHATELY;" "A MANUAL OF LOGIC;" A DICTIONARY,
"WALKER REMODELLED," CONTAINING NEW DEFINITIONS
OF THE CHIEF TERMS USED IN METAPHYSICS;
ETC.

"I have lost the immortal part of myself,
And what remains is bestial."—*Shakspeare.*

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.
1853.



LONDON: PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET
AND CHARING CROSS.

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

MY friend Mr. Drake having engaged me to prepare this volume for the press, tells me he expects that I shall furnish the Preface. But I am not aware that any preliminary statement is necessary, unless it be of the motive which led my friend to select me for his editor. This may be easily given. He happened to meet with some metaphysical essays which I published several years ago; and seeing that the views I entertained entirely coincided with those which the subject of this memoir was anxious to unfold, he could not doubt but that the manuscript would be safe, under my revision, from any changes that would essentially affect the character of those views. Indeed, the coincidence in question appeared so remarkable to me that I could not help a suspicion of plagiarism, and hinted my uneasiness on the point; on which Mr. Drake endeavoured to console me by an assurance that my essays were very

little known ; that he himself had lighted on them only by chance ; and that it was inevitable, when two persons started from the same point and went in the same direction, that they should not come on the same views, however ignorant of each other's journeying, and whatever difference might be in their times of starting. I was forced to acquiesce in this representation ; but I begged at the same time to declare to Mr. Drake, that if, distinctly from his other friend, I could not claim originality for the metaphysical views which are common to this volume and my own essays, I could claim, and did claim, the distinction of priority.

MEMOIR

OF

A METAPHYSICIAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISCUSSION.

IN the little parlour which opened behind the head master's desk from out of the schoolroom,—(it was a private school for a few boys, situate in a midland county at some distance from London),—there were seated on the eighteenth of December 1833, as very commonly happened on other Wednesday afternoons, the schoolmaster himself, and his two ushers. It was growing dusk, and two of the youngest of the boys, while their companions were noisily engaged in the play-ground, were sitting in silence near the elder persons, and, to guess by their looks, were both of them more than half asleep. With regard to one of them, the appearance was perhaps fallacious ; but I can personally vouch for the sleepiness of the other. I had tired myself at play ; and being the son of the schoolmaster, had come into the little parlour with less of ceremony than would have been exacted from any other pupil. My companion Harry—(so we called him, though his

name was Harold)—had been sent for; but he had not tired himself with play, nor was he found in the playground, but fast asleep in a corner close by the schoolroom fire. “How is this!” said my father to him, “have you not been at play since dinner, like the rest of the boys?” Harry told the truth, in answer, and continued to look as if he was still asleep. “Do you know, Harry, that this is your birth-day?” continued my father; “you are eight years old to-day” (he was just two months younger than myself); “and I had intended,” added my father, “that you and Frank here should go over to the drawingroom this evening, have a glass of gooseberry wine, and amuse yourselves with little Sophy for an hour or so: but you seem more fit for bed. Would you prefer having your tea here, and going to bed as usual when the others go?” There was no answer to the question, and therefore, evidently, no joyous acceptance of the invitation. “That boy,” continued my father, addressing himself to his assistants, “is a most mysterious little personage. For more than two days together he is never the same child. What boy could be more alive, more joyous and hearty than he was all day yesterday? He came to beg of me that he and Frank might be admitted into the nursery to go through their old games there with their little and earlier companion. Now he seems too stupid to think about her, or anything else.”

“You may be deceived, Sir,” said Mr. Gordon, the classical tutor, “you may be deceived in that look of his: it is not stupidity you see in his looks, but mental abstraction.”

“ I think I can explain the matter more naturally,” said Mr. Pfeffer, the teacher of the modern languages. “ The boy overeat himself at dinner, and consequently felt more disposed to go to sleep than go to play.”

“ Harry,” said my father, “ did you like your dinner to-day ?”

“ Yes Sir,” said Harry ; “ I like roast pork and apple pudding better than any other dinner.”

“ And how many times did you send up your plate ?”

“ A good many times, Sir ; I don’t remember how many.”

“ Did you observe him, Mr. Gordon ? At your own request he was taken from under Mrs. Drake’s immediate survey, and left to yours.”

Mr. Gordon was obliged to confess that he had not noticed what had nevertheless struck the observation of the German usher. “ But,” continued the former, “ I am not sorry for my oversight : I will turn Harry’s neglect of self-control in this instance to the best advantage in furthering my general plan. He is a boy of remarkable intellectuality—a boy of *mind*. I acknowledge that he has at present much also of the animal ; and hence the greater necessity for teaching him, from his earliest years, to subject the one existence entirely to the other. The discomfort he must have felt in this instance, evidenced by the absence of his usual spirituality, will afford me a ground of reasoning with him : for young as he is, he possesses nevertheless a mental grasp capable of embracing the widest questions.”

My father smiled. He was quite aware of the

strong theoretical opinions which the worthy Scotchman held. Two terms which Mr. Gordon had passed at Oxford in order to cap his previous studies at Aberdeen, had not essentially changed his northern prepossessions. The philosophy of the human mind, as he had learned it from Reid and Stewart, was ever foremost in his own mind, and in fulfilling his professional duties, it guided all his practice. In this practice, my father saw much that did not accord with his own views. He thought that the constant appeal to the reasoning or understanding faculties of a very young child, was likely to draw out too early those faculties to a preternatural strength, and render the child a little man before he had acquired the requisites of boyhood. In the present instance, in order to humour Mr. Gordon, he had given up young Harry to the Scotchman's guidance for a time only, intending to resume what he deemed a more wholesome plan of discipline hereafter. Nor did he, even now, yield a silent assent to the practical inferences of the theory propounded, though the inference which had just been laid down with pedantic generality, hardly admitted a contradiction.

My reader will doubtless wonder how I, confessing myself to have been more than half asleep at the time of this conference, and incapable, from my age, of understanding it even if I had been awake, am able to record it with any degree of truth. I answer, that my mature knowledge of the parties, and of their modes of thinking and reasoning, would, without other aid, be almost sufficient to instruct my pen in recovering any discussion which then took place be-

tween them, the circumstances, and the immediate occasion of it, being given. But if *I* could *not* then understand the conversation, my remarkable companion could ; and though, during its continuance, he looked as sleepy and stupid as myself, yet in him, as the Scotchman observed, it was but the indication of mental abstraction occupied in appropriating what came before it from without. Hence, when Harry and I had grown older together, I could easily recover, whenever I sought it, an almost word-for-word account of any such conversation as I am now engaged in recording.

My father, as I have said, smiled as Mr. Gordon concluded his remarks on the child's want of self-control, and turning to Harry, asked him if he had not felt very uncomfortable on finishing his dinner.

Harry quite understood the drift of the question, and felt that, for the support of Mr. Gordon and his views, entertaining as he did for both, at least at times, a most remarkable attachment, it was desirable that he should answer,—“Yes.” But Harry was a most truth-telling boy, who, though the truth might not be what he wished to say, never disguised his consciousness. So he said, at once, plainly and decidedly, that his dinner had not made him uncomfortable, but very comfortable and happy : he did not want anything when it was over but to go to sleep ; and as all the other boys went directly to the playground, and left the fireplace empty, he was able to take the corner he liked best, and the moment he sat down in it, he fell asleep.

"But," said my father, poking him rather roughly in the lower stomach, "I dare say you are rather uneasy and uncomfortable *there*, Harry."

Harry, however, still declared that he was quite comfortable; and when asked why he was not in the same high spirits as yesterday, and why he did not want to go and play with little Sophy, answered that he did not know he was not in spirits,—he durst say he should be so to-morrow;—and as for little Sophy, he should like a game of play with her some other day; but, if permitted, he wished on that evening to stay with Mr. Gordon till bedtime, and go over the way to bed as usual when the other boys went up stairs.

While all this was passing, Mr. Pfeffer was manipulating the child's skull in all possible directions—from the neck over to the nose,—from the left ear to the right,—from across the forehead just above the nose,—and from the nose upwards to the top of the head. "Well," said my father who was watching this process; "what have you found out Mr. Pfeffer: is it a good cranium; are all the organs well developed, or likely to be well developed, and in due proportion to each other?"

"It is an excellent head," said Mr. Pfeffer.

"But is there no excess of any one of the organs?"

"Why, certainly, just above the neck here," said the disciple of Spurzheim, "there is ample space for development; but in a child like this, the indication amounts to nothing."

"Have you not an organ," said my father, with the same sort of smile which had occurred in addressing

his other assistant—"have you not an organ of Roast-porkandapplepuddingness?"

"I care not for your jokes," said Mr. Pfeffer. "Dr. Spurzheim, whose acquaintance I made, as you are aware, when I last went to London, was obliged to meet many such jokes; but he was too strong in his science to be disturbed by them."

"*Science!*" cried my father. "What do you mean in this case by science? Science demonstrative, like pure geometry, or science inductive, like chemistry?"

"Science inductive, of course," said Mr. Pfeffer.

"How is it possible," returned my father, "even supposing the facts which are to establish the existence of all the organs that Dr. Spurzheim has mapped out upon the human skull—even, I say, supposing the facts to be easily collectible, how is it possible that in so short a time as he has been at work they could have been collected? It is evident that he has mapped out the organs first, taking some that had been made tolerably probable by his more patient coadjutor Gall, and has left the proof of these organs to come with time. Now suppose that in twenty years from the present moment, there should be little or no change in this map-work of the skull, will not such permanence be a proof that the doctrine admits not of being established in its details by an indication of facts, but rests only on strong probability or likelihood? And for my own part, I am quite ready to listen to the doctrine if no stronger ground is claimed for it; I believe and have long believed that if we *could* come at the differences of brain and nerve, and other parts of the animal organization among men,

we should always find these differences to be in exact correspondence with the differences of what we call *mind* among them."

Mr. Gordon at this moment was seized with a slight cough ; but my father, taking no immediate notice of it, thus proceeded :

" You see, therefore, Mr. Pfeffer, that I am much more near to your way of thinking now that you are become a disciple of Spurzheim, than while you were wandering with your other countryman in the fields of transcendental philosophy, and calling upon us, with Kant, to bow to *the Criticism of pure Reason*. You remember I used to allow to that doctrine the credit of being demonstrative, provided we granted its first principles ; but these principles, inasmuch as they had their origin only in abstractions created by language, and were alike insusceptible of proof and of disproof, I always refused to admit : and this refusal put a stop to our discussions the moment they had begun."

Then turning to his other assistant, in order to meet the objection which the short cough had seemed to convey, my father added :

" The initial objection which I make to German, I also make to Scottish Metaphysics ; I do not admit that there is any *scientific* ground for a *philosophy of the human mind* ; for I know nothing of what mind is separate from the body ; neither do I know what matter is, which the Scottish philosophers, following Plato, understand to be a substance distinct from mind—I say, I do not know what matter is apart from the sensible objects among which I live. But

while I decline the assumed foundation of Scottish metaphysics, I do not refuse the whole structure. I fully admit that our consciousness and its several states are fit subjects of philosophical inquiry : I further admit that the facts of consciousness are far more ascertainable and collectible, than the facts required to establish the existence of the organs of the brain mapped out on the skull by Spurzheim. And as both doctrines, namely the Philosophy of the Mind on the one hand, and Phrenology on the other, are, or pretend to be, inductive inquiries, I regret that they are not united under some such name as the Philosophy of MAN, his Propensities, his Sentiments, and his Intellectual Powers. Such a purpose would give legitimate ground for inquiry in the two directions,—from what is outwardly examinable, and what is examinable inwardly, namely the facts of consciousness. Thus should we get rid of the doctrines both of spiritualism and materialism, by merging them in one inquiry,—an inquiry concerning MAN, and the conditions of his knowledge,—what he knows, what he can know, and what he cannot know. Let Phrenology and Metaphysics thus unite, and, in due time, as they will then assist each other, some results of practical value legitimately entitled to the name of science, may perhaps be obtained.”

“ I am quite unable,” said Mr. Gordon, “ to take up such modes of thinking. First, I am unable to conceive how you can identify the speculations of Reid, and Stewart, and Brown, with the dreams of Kant and Fichté. Secondly”—

“ Let me reply to your *first*,” interrupted my

father, "before you proceed to your *secondly*. I assure you—and I think what I said just now might already have assured you—that I see nothing which your Scottish metaphysics have in common with German, except that you Scots so far fall in with the practice of the transcendentalists, as to begin by a pure abstraction, which abstraction you would have us take for an established reality, while the proof of its being a distinct reality lies beyond the reach of human power. When however we have passed the threshold of your science, I acknowledge that the bulk of what follows has a practical value, while German metaphysics, dealing throughout with abstractions only, are altogether inapplicable to any purpose of life. Their imposing effect arises from this,—that, just as in geometry, a beginning is made from certain first principles, which being admitted, all that follows is necessarily true. But geometry itself would be valueless if its abstractions had no correspondence with realities—if the metaphysical point, or line, or angle, or circle, did not practically apply to the physical—the real—point, line, angle, or circle, which is placed before our eyes, or subjected to our touch. The German metaphysicians do not even pretend that their abstractions have a correspondence with realities which our present faculties can reach :—what then is the value of their demonstrative process when we cannot rely on the existence of those subjects from which the process begins? Your Scottish metaphysics do not pretend to be demonstrative, but to make way, by induction from single facts, to the establishment of general truths. Such being my apprehension of the

difference between German metaphysics and yours, I cannot be said to identify them. Now, then, for your *secondly*”—

“Secondly, then, I affirm,” said Mr. Gordon, “that in denying the reality of *mind*, you take away from the human race the ground of our existence after death.”

“To that remark,” replied my father, “I have first to say, that I do not deny the reality of mind: what I say, is, that no such thing as mind offers itself to my present powers of observation; but I neither affirm nor deny that such a thing exists.”

“What!” cried the Scotchman with warmth, “have you no present experience of mind, when you reflect, and reason, and conclude? How can the body do all this?”

“Pardon me, Mr. Gordon: you are begging the whole question,” said my father. “What I affirm is this—that MAN is created with powers of reflection, reasoning, and so forth; and what I deny is, that either the body as you define it, or the mind as you define it, is the man.”

“But the body is, at least, a reality,” said Mr. Gordon; “and death clearly teaches us that the powers of thought and reasoning belong not to it. The body cannot do without the mind.”

“And how do you know that the mind can do without the body? Let us, Mr. Gordon, except for mere ordinary conversational purposes, let us dispense with both words, and speak of our subject under the one name MAN. Now, why do I take away the ground of our existence after death, by refusing to

admit, as a scientific truth, your division of man into two substances?"

"Because, if the carcase which he leaves behind is not immortal—(and who will say that it is?—) there is nothing immortal if there exist not another substance distinct from the carcase, and now separated from it."

"Well; *that* I am aware is the common way of speaking on the subject; and as a mode of understanding what indeed lies beyond our human knowledge, I do not object to it. I object to it only when it pretends to bring the fact of man's immortality within the compass not of our belief, but of our comprehension and knowledge. And affirming it to be a matter of belief only, I feel myself at liberty to apprehend the credible fact in the way which satisfies me best. Some may apprehend it best when explained in Plato's manner, but, for my part, I prefer that of Paul, as coming nearer to the analogies of all created things that I am acquainted with; I believe that, in dying, man is sown like a seed in order to rise again, if fit to rise; and that he will rise, not a mind without a body, or a body without a mind, but a new and glorified creature altogether. Permit me to say further, that if metaphysicians must reduce man to an abstraction, and use the word implying that abstraction as a name for the concrete, it would, I think, be far preferable to select the term *Will* for the purpose, and not the term *Mind*; for then we should understand why man, and man alone among the animals, is immortal. If *mind* is the ground of immortality, why should not brutes be immortal? Who has found out

the line which separates the lowest grade of human, from the highest of brute mind? No wonder that Thomas Brown, perhaps the clearest headed of your Scottish metaphysicians, should have confessed to his familiar friends that he believed the mind in either case to be immortal. But if the subjugation of the *Will* to a higher principle than animal instinct—if the subjugation of the *animal* will, to the instructed *human* will,—if this be asserted as the ground of man's immortality, we can understand why the existence of brutes should terminate with this life, but that man, if duly prepared, should die now, only to rise, the same being glorified, in another sphere of action."

My father paused, and as neither of his coadjutors seemed disposed to continue the discussion, he might, with less knowledge of human nature than he possessed, have flattered himself that he had drawn his friends into his own way of thinking. But no man knew better than he, the difficulty of changing the point of view in which an adult person is accustomed to consider a subject: habits of thought, he often said, are of all habits the most difficult to put aside. Upon the fair-complexioned German, indeed, who counted for his age at that time only some six or seven and twenty years, and who already (flattered by being known as an acquaintance of Spurzheim) had given up Transcendentalism for Phrenology, my father might think that he had made some impression: but Mr. Gordon was of less yielding material. He was twenty years older than Mr. Pfeffer, with searching eyes, high cheek-bones, a large fore-

head on which thought had left its ridges, and a frame knit together by the temperance of a well-ordered life. However he might differ from my father in some matters of opinion, he was very careful never to make this difference offensive; to which motive might be attributed his silence when my father ceased speaking. The pause lasted full five minutes, and then my father said:—

“ Well, gentlemen, though perhaps it is impossible we should exactly agree in our theoretical views, yet I trust that our practice with regard to the instruction which each of us has to give, will be carried on in the same direction, and have one and the same general purpose; and especially as to this boy. We all of us allow that Nature has highly gifted him: you are besides aware of the very favourable circumstances under which he is placed with me, so that I am not likely to be interfered with in the plans I may adopt to make him all that he should be. Professing ourselves *educators* of youth, and having so favourable a subject for our skill, it would indeed be discreditable to us in the highest degree, since here he is entirely ours to form and to train up—it would I say be a dreadful discredit to our professed ability, should young Harry here grow up with any abundance of the qualities about him, which we are taught to believe come from old Harry.”

The jocular tone with which my father uttered or tried to utter the last words, while he put his hand on the child's head, and then patted his cheek, did not prevent an ominous sigh from escaping as he took up his hat to pass from the schoolroom across the play-

ground into the dwellinghouse. Thither I accompanied him to join my sister Sophy, while Harry remained in the little parlour of the schoolroom, anxious to hear what Mr. Gordon had to say in addition to the discourse which had already been held, and to which, child though he was, he had been deeply attentive.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCHOOL—ITS CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNITY.

I HAVE said that the school at which the discussion related in the previous chapter took place, was in a midland county of England. I do not give the name of the county, nor, in this memoir, must reliance be placed on the accuracy of any names, even when I furnish them. I am under what I consider a sacred obligation to record the tale which these pages contain ; but I am not bound to drag into public view persons and circumstances that shrink from notoriety. With this general premonition to my reader, I proceed to state, with as much particularity as necessary, the facts connected with what I have thus far narrated.

My father's school never counted more than thirty pupils, and the average was scarcely more than twenty ; but the stipend was liberal, and the payment sure. He was a Cambridge man ; and, among the warmest of his college friends, were three who had gone abroad, and had established prosperous families, one in the Western world, and the other two in the East. From them, and their very wide connections, his school was

exclusively supplied. There was no going home, unless visits to friends could be called so, when holiday times came at our school : our house was the home of all our pupils during the time they stayed with us. My father had travelled a little after leaving Cambridge, and had seen enough of society to rid himself of the rust of learning. A gentleman in his own habits, he treated his ushers as gentlemen, and not as ushers were treated in the days of Goldsmith. His particular department in the school was Mathematics ; but he was quite competent to superintend the other departments of classical literature and the modern languages ; each of which, as I have already said, had its special professor. Beside these teachers, we had visitant masters for writing and for the accomplishments from the neighbouring county town ; and occasional lecturers who came from London, were liberally patronized. There was an excellent library in the house, and apparatus for philosophical experiments ; to both of which, under due regulations, the elder scholars had access : and to gratify his own taste, and guide that of others, my father had begun the collection of a well-chosen picture-gallery. Thus was every facility for instruction afforded which could be collected at the time in a midland part of England. As to the domestic arrangements, they were under my mother's care ; and I forbear to speak of her matronly qualities, and of the respect which they secured from husband, children, schoolboys, servants, lest my encomiums should be charged with extravagance. Our servants were all natives of the village where we lived, and were unsophisticated and trustworthy—at least, if now and then

the frailty of our human nature became apparent in their humble lives, no vice of deep dye could be objected to them. Upon the whole, nothing could be more happy than our little community ; and I may add that the scenery around us had the reputation of enchanting beauty. How happy were the times to which I thus look back ! how warm with life the house and the schoolroom ! Alas !——

But I must not allow my feelings to carry me onward faster than I can tell my tale. This tale refers to the child whom we left in the care of the Scottish teacher mentioned in the last chapter. The child came into our house almost mysteriously ; and in a strange manner has he subsequently affected the fortunes of my family. I crave attention to the facts as they occurred.

In the year 1825—6, the people of Brazil, then under the rule of Don Pedro, became strongly prepossessed in favour of the English generally ; and it so happened that, at the same time, my father's reputation for talent and integrity reached one or two circles of society in that empire. The general good feeling mingled itself in some way with my father's narrow fame : for I cannot otherwise account for a trust confided to him by people whom he knew not, and has never known, not even by name. The trust I speak of came in the shape of a babe not more than nine months old at the breast of a Creole foster-nurse, and through the instrumentality of a mercantile house of the first respectability in London. It seems to have been known that my mother had a nursling of the same age ; for the request accompanying the child

was, that it might be brought up in my mother's nursery till old enough for my father's school ; when his education was to be entirely at my father's discretion. He had been baptized *Harold*, and doubtless the rite had been performed according to Roman Catholic usage ; but no stipulation was made that his religious training should be other than my father chose. As to his surname, we were desired to call him *Fremdling*. Not only an ample, but a magnificent provision was made, first, for his maintenance and education, and then in case of his surviving till of age, for his permanent endowment. The greatest prudence had been used in choosing securities for executing the provisions in this country ; but the original parties contrived to shroud themselves, and remain quite unknown. Whoever they were, recent inquiries lead us to believe that both mother and father have long been dead ; which event doubtless put an end to what seems to have been the intention of one or both of the parents, namely to settle in this country. That they were wealthy persons, the very great sum transmitted in bullion left out of question ; that the child was the fruit of illicit love, seemed nearly as certain ; since we could account for its abandonment and its rich endowment, only by believing that each parent had vied with the other in thus making a sacrifice on the one side to natural affection, on the other, to the dread of discovery and shame. With regard to the foster-nurse, she was unable to afford us any light. She had received the babe from its birth, and saw the mother only once ; had been brought from a distance to be ready for her charge, and having received it, was

hastened to another distant spot, where she stayed, under superintendence, till it was thought that she and the child might be embarked with safety. Of this embarkation, the mercantile house had been apprised, so that on the nurse's arrival in England, she and her little charge were at once brought to our house. Her services were of course retained; and I have only to add that she described the mother as having the complexion of a native Brazilian, that she was superbly beautiful, and had the airs and condescension of a princess. Of the father, she possessed only hearsay intelligence; and this went to show that he was a European or the son of a European, but of what particular country, she was uncertain. He was not a Frenchman, she was almost sure:—he might be an Englishman, but she believed not. Upon the whole, we conjectured, from various circumstances, that he was a German, and that remained a settled opinion in our family.

It is difficult to convey an impression of the effect which the arrival of this little stranger produced in our community. The outward effect could not, of course, be great. A baby and a servant to nurse it was added to my mother's nursery: that was as nothing. But the schemes that it engendered might be something. Now my father was not a schemer; nor I think, by nature was my mother: but our Scottish auxiliary was a far-seeing man. Mr. Gordon must forgive me: several years have passed since we were intimate:—he has possessed himself of my father's school and connections; and there was a time when I fancied that this was attained by what I then consi-

dered underhanded management:—yet must I avow that he was working, at the same moment, to secure to me an independence above the labours of a schoolmaster's life; and in both points he has eminently succeeded. Still, when I compare what I have of worldly wealth, with what might now have been mine in those dear connections which give to life all its sweetness, I am apt to quarrel with the agents of this change. But again I am anticipating what my narrative should reserve for the proper time and place; and if, in the course of this narrative, I attribute to Mr. Gordon motives which he did not entertain, he will perceive that I have not compromised him by exactitude of name, but that, for the general purpose I have in view, I state facts in the shape they assumed to my understanding, when I became capable of examining them.

It is hard to waste life in a subordinate office, without hope of an improvement as age draws on. Mr. Gordon no doubt felt this hardship; and, to soften it, imagined an improvement which required only venial manœuvring to be turned into reality. My father's school would, in the course of things, devolve on him, if a necessity to provide for me did not stand in the way: and Mr. Gordon was anxious that my father should lay up a fortune ample enough for such provision. To my father, nothing seemed more kind and faithful than the constant suggestions of his assistant, that the school could be managed with far more economy than was allowed to prevail; but my father, without turning a deaf ear to these suggestions, or seeming ungrateful for them, still continued his

liberal expenditure, and disbursed almost as much as he received. Our Scottish friend was perhaps pondering on some new mode of influencing my father, when the little rich stranger came among us. How *his* wealth was to be of advantage to *us*, did not indeed plainly appear; but it opened something in the distant future, on which very sanguine hopes were able to rest; and when, some twenty months after, my mother gave birth to a daughter, those hopes became more distinct. Our Scottish friend, putting his own person in my father's place, saw at once how he himself would act under the circumstances, and took care to suggest his views at every favourable opportunity:

"Look at those dear wee creatures," he would say to my father, pointing over the pales that separated the front garden of the house from the playground, in which garden a nursemaid accompanied by two toddling boys was walking with another babe in her arms: "look at the sweet wee things, and just fancy what they may be twenty years hence."

"Why, if Providence favours their growth," my father would reply, "they will by that time be wee things no longer."

"Ay," said the Scotchman, "but how, think ye, may they be related to one another?"

"As they are now related," said my father: "I do not see how their growth should change their relationship."

"That's just worth considering," quoth the Scotchman. And leaving the dose to work its effect, would break off the colloquy.

At another time, he would engage my father's

attention by a recital concerning his Scottish cousins. "We should have been rich," he would say, "but that there were so many of us, and all the estate came to be divided between my uncles James and Malcolm. Now James had an only child, a son, and Malcolm an only child, a daughter; and it was very certain that the next degree of inheritance would produce a lawsuit for the possession of the whole estate. The clear preventive for this was to marry the two cousins when they should become marriageable. But how was this to be made sure? for love in Scotland as well as elsewhere is apt to war against prudence. The two mothers took the affair in hand, and, being equally experienced in matters of this sort, agreed upon one common plan. The lassie was to be told, from her infancy, that little James, and none but James, was to be her husband, that so, through woman's natural constancy, her affections should fix and settle for once and for ever. James, on the other hand, was to be told that his rich and beautiful little cousin could never be his bride; and that he must be on his guard against falling in love with her. The effect was, that the young people were scarcely of age when each one ran away from home, and, meeting at a common friend's, they declared themselves, before witnesses, to be man and wife."

My father was not the sort of man to see an interested motive, when, on the surface, there appeared a disinterested one that aimed at himself. He listened therefore with pleasure to Mr. Gordon's suggestions, and felt an influence from them, I venture to say, even before he was aware. And if, in any degree,

our Scottish friend was able thus to give a particular direction to my father's hopes, he succeeded still more effectually with my mother. It was impossible that a matron's heart should not be captivated by so interesting a child as Harry was daily growing to be ; and when little Sophy found her feet, and was able to romp with the boys, my mother, with Mr. Gordon's speeches sounding in her ears, was accustomed, I do not doubt, to look upon them in their gambols with a silent prayer that they might never be separated, and a determination to do all in her power to bring the prayer to a fulfilment.

And thus time went on till Harry reached his eighth birth-day, and the discussion took place which I described in the last chapter. There were but two events in our community of importance enough to notice, before I take up my narrative at the point where I then left off. The one event was the accession of the amiable young German, Mr. Pfeffer, to the family. He re-implaced an old French emigrant, who had sunk beneath the weight of years ; and he soon showed himself, even in teaching the French language, a much more capable instructor. The other event was the death of the Creole foster-nurse, for whose lungs accustomed to a warmer atmosphere, our bracing air proved too much. Thus was the only tie snapped, which had joined the infant to the land of his birth, and of his unknown, and, I almost add, mysterious parents. He was now, if anything, entirely one of ourselves.

CHAPTER III.

EDUCATION—ITS THEORIES, AND ITS INFLUENCES,
DIRECT AND INDIRECT.

How very different, in immediate practical value, are the truths we arrive at, by the modern mode of investigation in Physics, and those we lay down in Ethics !

Take, for an example of the former, the physical truth, that *the particles of fluids press equally in all directions, and that water, if unobstructed, must find its level.*

Acting with certainty of success under the light of this ascertained truth, he who undertakes, for the benefit of his fellow men, the management of the element in question, reaches all the effects that can be attained—in other words, he secures to them, by his science, all the conveniences and comforts which the element is fitted to afford.

For an example of a truth in Ethics, take the *general proposition*,—that *man is what his education makes him, and we make him what he should be, when we fit him for the purposes of his being.* The proposition is unquestionable if, by education, we

mean what we ought to mean, namely all the influences that act upon the individual, whether direct and open, or indirect and secret.

But unquestionable as it is if thus interpreted, what is its immediate practical value? As a general truth under the light of which we are to apply a sure process in the training of A, B, C or D, its worth is absolutely nothing. The term *man* in the proposition misleads us by suggesting that the process is to be applied, in all cases, to the same subject: this is far from being true. Supposing what is impossible in the present state of society, that we could command all the influences direct and indirect which constitute education, our subject is not always the same, and the education which might be proper for A and B, would be improper, perhaps of ruinous tendency, in the case of C and D. Let it however be supposed that the subject is beforehand accurately known, and that the influences which are to produce the effect upon him, can all be commanded and directed,—are we agreed upon the effect sought? *The purposes of our being!* What are they? We come upon the great problem, in the attempted solution of which, the wise or professedly wise have been occupied from the beginning of philosophy till now; and that there is yet no universal agreement upon it, is but a too flagrant fact. Ay, but some one may say, we have at least thus far advanced as a race, that the distracting arguments of mere human philosophy are no longer regarded, and Religion is appealed to as the indicator of the true purposes of our existence—Religion, which teaches us that our existence here is meant to prepare us for a

better existence hereafter, and that no education can be fit for man which looks not beyond the grave. Suppose we admit that this is the persuasion of the thinking part of our race—does it bring us to unity of principle and of practice? All Religions teach us to prepare for a future existence—Judaism, Christianity, Mahomedanism, Buddhism, and—Hold! cries the Christian, nor join in the argument, even for an instant, other religions of the earth, with that which you and I profess. Ours indeed embraces at present no very large portion of the whole race, but it comprehends the more intelligent and civilized portion, and year after year it is drawing greater and greater numbers within its pale. Be it, then, admitted that according to the judgement of those best capable of judging, the education which fits man for the purposes of his being, is a Christian education. Are we now agreed? Far, far from it,—questions arise as numerous as ever. What Christianity are we to teach—Athanasian or Arian Christianity,—Roman or Lutheran,—Armenian or Calvinistic? Nay, but in this country at least, where we have a form of Christianity established according to law, the question, (so some will say,) ought not to be put. And if we did not put it, what then? Are we of the Church of England agreed among ourselves how our youth shall be instructed? Some of us are of high, and some of low Church principles—some take up Puseyism, some the evangelicism of dissent—some insist on the right of private judgement in matters of religion, some would give up all to the Church—some admit, and some deny, the ecclesiastical supremacy of the sove-

reign. Where, amid this din, shall we find the standard according to which the teacher of youth is bound to train his subject-pupil?

The fact then is, that the general propositions we lay down in ethics, including those of politics, which are a department of ethics, are propositions whose true practical solution yet remains to be ascertained:—they do not, like the ascertained laws of physics, at once unfold the proper course of action or of procedure in the case. Let us see this in another example like the last, only changed from education to politics. What more reasonable than the popular call often so loudly heard,—the call for *liberty, fraternity, and equality*? for it means, if it have the reasonable meaning presumed, that these three things should be secured to society in the utmost possible degree and proportion which society can bear. But admitting this, there remains the question, and that question is indeed all in all, how we *can* secure to society a greater amount of these three things, in such manner that by our procedure, we shall not endanger so much of each as is already enjoyed? And this practical question, like the one involved in the previous inquiry concerning education, yet remains to be solved.

But are such general propositions, then, of no value at all? Yes, they are of inestimable value if we do not mistake their true character—if we do not suppose that they justify each and every means which, in our present state of incapacity, are employed to realize them. It is surely something, amid this wide struggle concerning means, to entertain a general agreement with respect to ends. To me at least it seems that,

short of the light of revelation, nothing proves the immortal nature of man more clearly, than the power he has to form these notions of perfection and of happiness, which exist in his belief and hope, but do not and cannot at present exist in reality and fruition.

Therefore, let the world go on, struggling and striving as heretofore. We have nothing to fear for our race except where any portion of it attempts to stand still. There is no standing still: if we go not forward, we shall, against our will, be carried backward; of which fact, History, in some of her pages, affords pregnant evidence. But the race at large, since the Flood, has never gone back; and even the failures of the indolent and the ignorant have been lessons to the active. The failure of every experiment, if we record it well, must always be a lesson. Thus have Physics advanced, and thus will Ethics at last, however distant the period, be a practical science, though now little better than purely speculative. But the paramount subject of ethics is education: when this, as a practical question, shall be settled, all will be settled. Let us, if it be only for the sake of argument, suppose this result possible, what innumerable failures must be recorded before it can be reached! The memoir I have undertaken records a failure,—to my apprehension, an instructive and important one, or I should not have thought fit to come with it before the public. And now, having ventured on these general observations, I return to the special duty which I have thus imposed upon myself.

We left the child, Harold Fremdling, at the end of the first chapter, in the hands of Mr. Gordon, who

continued seated in the little parlour attached to our schoolroom. Harry was eager to hear what Mr. Gordon had further to say in continuation of the discussion; and Mr. Gordon, who did not like the way in which my father had endeavoured to terminate it, was quite as eager to engage the attention of his infant pupil. In these conferences between master and scholar, Mr. Gordon's custom was, to place the young child between his knees; and while his right hand held the right hand of the child, and the other was placed on the child's forehead, he would look with his own piercing eyes into those of his pupil, with a steadiness not easily described. His purpose was, as he said, to fix the child's attention to subjects which only the mind, abstracted from the body, is competent to deal with; and certainly the effects which followed seemed to justify his theory. The child listened till his eyelids winked, and his eyes lost apparently their speculation; yet still he seemed clearly to follow the teacher's argument, and to answer at times with a rationality that perfectly corresponded to Mr. Gordon's views. I am now speaking not of this conversation in particular, but of this and of many others which resembled it; in all of which the child exhibited the same capacity for abstraction, and proved, according to Mr. Gordon's conviction, how the mind can, in a certain degree, be raised out of the body, even before the time which will separate the one from the other eternally.

One fact rather stood in the way of Mr. Gordon's theory—a fact that has already been alluded to—that Harry was never so much of a mere little feeding

animal, as while he was in these fits of abstraction. At other times, he was a joyous, unselfish boy, rather temperate than gluttonous; but while he was under Mr. Gordon's wing, he was no longer himself. He held no opinion but Mr. Gordon's; he was not at rest if not immediately at Mr. Gordon's side; and he frustrated Mr. Gordon in nothing but in self-indulgence whenever he could find opportunity for it. Yet this subservient state was not more remarkable, than the suddenness with which he would awake from it, and be altogether a different boy,—not remembering, or at least disavowing, all that he had said or done previously. "Why, Harry," a schoolfellow would say to him, "what a queer humour you were in all day yesterday! Have you come back to your house?"

"What do you mean?" Harry would say, with an exclamation of "Bother!" as if the question perplexed, but did not properly concern him.

"Why you told us yesterday that your *body* was your house, and that you yourself was *mind*."

"All nonsense," Harry would reply; "Mr. Drake says that *mind* is only a word, and I believe him more than I do Mr. Gordon."

"Yes, but you said yesterday your mind was you yourself, and your body only your house, though you were obliged to take care of it; and precious care you did take of it, for when you saw that the plum-pudding at dinner was a very little one, you got next to Mrs. Drake, and coaxed her out of one slice after another, till the rest of us scarcely got a taste of it at all."

"Bother!" said Harry: "Come, Tom, let us go

and choose sides for cricket.” And away they went, Harry sure to be in his element ; for though one of the youngest in the playground, he was the sharpest and the cleverest, the moment he was all himself.

Mr. Pfeffer, our young German, who was altogether opposed to Mr. Gordon’s theoretical management of little Harry, used to say, when Mr. Gordon had brought their common pupil into one of these abstracted states, that *the music of the heart* was silenced for the time : but this poetical expression which sprung spontaneously from the occasion, did not satisfy the disciple of Spurzheim when he began to theorise on the fact. He then insisted that the phrenological organs were not fairly dealt with—that some of them were sent to sleep while others were preternaturally excited ; an explanation which much amused my father :—he wished to know who was the visitor of these colleges or chambers of the skull, and when the visitations took place, for the purpose of ascertaining which among the delinquent tenants were napping, and which of them were more wide awake than they ought to be. Yet my father, though incapable of keeping pace with the enthusiastic young German, always listened to him with pleasure, and felt, I have good reason to know, the warmest friendship for him, while I could not help thinking that he stood in some little awe of his other usher, the stern gaunt Scotchman. Mr. Pfeffer was not yet arrived at the age when opinion is, as they say, like a rusty weathercock, capable of pointing only one way ; he sometimes felt misgivings of the accuracy of even Spurzheim himself, and having been struck

by my father's remark that the Will of a man may be fairly deemed the man himself, he doubted whether there ought not to be an organ found out under that denomination to control and unite the rest. To this my father made a decided objection. "The Will," he said, "is the man entire,—not a part of him, or a particular organ. I have no objection to the word *mind*, when it is used for the man entire; I object to it only when it is put forth to assert, as a scientific fact, not as a matter of belief, that man is constituted of two substances, and that science is cognizant of these. This cognizance is what I deny. We know not, and cannot know, whether such is or is not the fact. Now in proposing the term *Will* as an abstraction, instead of the term *Mind*, to signify the man entire, I see some advantages which I will try to explain a little further. What I understand by Will is this,—the choice of one out of two or more alternatives, when we know that each alternative is in our power. Less than this is not Will, at least as I would use the term: it may be Wish, or Desire, but it is not Will. One of the mischievous subtleties of misapplied metaphysics is the doctrine of fate or necessity,—in other words, the assertion that the human will is not free,—a doctrine which springs from the arrogant persuasion that we can understand the nature of Almighty Will with relation to our own. We assume man to be the measure of all things, even of God; and because man cannot make an automaton whose motions shall not be predetermined by the maker, we draw the same conditions around the Almighty Maker. Dark, intensely dark, is the ignorance that cannot see the

limits of its little field of knowledge, and attempts, in consequence, “by searching, to find out God.” Let us be content with what we *can* know, and we shall be satisfied that the will is free, by a conception and definition, necessary as the conception and definition of a circle or other element in mathematics. The moment you exclude freedom from the definition, it is Will no longer. Accordingly, if you shackle a man’s limbs, you leave, indeed, the wish to move them, but, as the power to do so is gone, the Will, using the word in the sense which I ascribe to it, is also gone; and so again, if I am to accept your explanation of the effect produced upon young Harry by Mr. Gordon’s strenuous tuition,—if it be true that he sends some of the organs of his pupil’s brain to sleep, and preternaturally excites others,—why young Harry, during such effect, is not young Harry; his *Will* is not what it would be; it is not his own will, but Mr. Gordon’s. In a state of drunkenness, a man’s proper will is gone, and we justly say of him that he is not himself. If we do not excuse the illegal acts he may commit while in this state, it is because he is responsible for the act of the will by which he became drunk—because he is in fact a voluntary madman. Other madness is in general, though not always, involuntary. The madman’s will is a diseased will; and we take this away that he may not hurt himself and others. So we restrict a young child’s will, not indeed because it is diseased, but because it is as yet uninformed or unenlightened, and we give him his will in proportion as we can safely trust him with it. In the same manner, always taking the utmost possible care to

provide the means of education, ought we to deal with those who are called the lower orders of a community. With regard to religion, the resignation of one's own will to the will of the Deity, is the great principle we are called upon to carry into practice; and if all mankind were agreed in their interpretation of the divine Will"—

Here, I can well believe that my father would make a pause. He was afraid of encouraging, in the young German, such "go-a-head notions," as those into which I fell in commencing this chapter,—notions which, however unconsciously, I probably owe to Mr. Pfeffer. Otherwise, my father would have gone on to say that the religious zealot is, as the drunken man, a voluntary madman, intoxicated so as to mistake the fumes of his own fancy, or the dogmas of some one denomination of religionists, for the ascertained Will of the Deity. He bars up, on the one side, all approach of human reason; for how shall human reason dare to stand in face of what, to his dazzled understanding, is truth that comes direct from God?—and, on the other hand, he glories in being the victim of any force, that would drive him from the stage on which, with God's approbation as he thinks in his favour, he is acting so fearful a part.

That these would be included in my father's thoughts while discoursing on the abuses of the human Will, I have good ground to know. Why he thought it prudent to keep them back in his conversation with Mr. Pfeffer, will appear before I am much further advanced in my narrative. In the mean time the conversation would be brought to an end, by a

declaration that if the enlightenment of the human Will was at present far, very far from perfection, yet was it advancing daily, so that we might hope a time would come when, to use the words of the philosophical poet—

“ When, deeply drinking in the soul of things
We shall be wise perforce ; and, while inspired
By choice, and conscious that the Will is free,
Shall move unswerving, even as impelled
By strict necessity, along the path
Of order and of good.”—WORDSWORTH'S *Excursion*.

My father was of a most kindly disposition, perhaps too kindly to carry out with necessary firmness the suggestions of a judgement always clear and upright. He did not like Mr. Gordon's management of young Harry, and he intended to put a stop to it ; but seeing that the Scotchman had his heart in the experiment, he allowed him to continue it for a time. He disapproved of certain little tactics which were acted upon in the nursery at the house over the way, where little Sophy, now about six years of age, was told that Harry's mother was a princess, perhaps a queen, and that when she, Sophy, should be a woman, and Harry a man, Harry and she were to be married. My mother, if she did not actually take a part in these nursery proceedings, did nothing to discourage them, but allowed Mr. Gordon, who had ingratiated himself much in her good opinion, to talk to the nursery maids without hindrance.

On one point, however, my father's firmness never gave way, namely in his constant support of Mr.

Pfeffer. The young German needed this support. For though of the most amiable disposition, and more beloved than any master by the whole circle of scholars, he was no favourite either of the Scotchman, or of my mother, one of whom taxed him with the heresy of materialism, while the other, both on this and other grounds, entertained doubts concerning the soundness of his religion. Such suspicion did him great injustice; he was a Lutheran bred, and had conformed to the Church of England with perfect sincerity. But my mother was in the habit of listening to our vicar, Dr. Brown, who was almost as much at our house as at his own, and was another of the family (we might almost consider him one of the family) that viewed Mr. Pfeffer and his principles with an unfavourable eye. Many in number, and vehement in character, had been the discussions between these two gentlemen; nor had Mr. Pfeffer gained any good-will, by making Dr. Brown conscious that he, the German, excelled him, the Oxford man well-read-up in logic, in clearness of statement and candour of argument: on the contrary, the ill-will on the vicar's side became, at every fresh discussion, more manifest, till my father at last prevailed on Mr. Pfeffer to decline all controversial discourse with the doctor. Even this did not stop the vicar's angry recriminations; for as Mr. Pfeffer declined to be talked *to*, his opponent took every opportunity to talk *at* him, nor was there a single invention, or principle, or opinion of ill omen that sprung up in the year then passing and the years that followed, which Dr. Brown did not ascribe to the prevalence of such ways of thinking as Mr. Pfeffer had

avowed. I can remember, as an example of the vicar's mode of talking, some remarks he made on the occasion of a new humbug, as he called it, coming up or being revived about the year thirty-eight or thirty-nine—that is, some four or five years after the time which these early chapters of our memoir keep mainly in view.

“And here,” said the vicar in continuation of some foregoing observations, “here is a new piece of devilism going on at one of the London hospitals, the resuscitation of what they call Mesmerism, first set on foot by Mesmer, a German quack who practised in Paris some fifty years ago or more—those Germans are sure to be at the bottom of every pestilent principle, and every damnable practice. It is pretended, at least by one of the doctors, that a curative influence can be exercised in many cases without the aid of drugs, along with other extraordinary effects, simply by the will of one human being acting on another, and giving out power by the fingers, which point at, and pass over, the eyes, the limbs, and the body. Why the pretence to such power, by any mere man, is flagrant blasphemy, and the doctor who comes forward with such a pretence ought to be cited, on that ground, before the proper courts. I am glad, however, to find that there is an orthodoxy in medicine as well as in divinity; for the doctor in question is scouted by his brethren, and left to pursue his schismatic and devilish practices elsewhere than in authorized institutions. But all this, and all other evil of the same kind, comes from our not keeping to the wisdom of our forefathers: scarce a month passes that does

not yield some new monster — mesmerism, homœopathy, and hydropathy, in medicine—communism, socialism, liberalism, and I know not how many other destructive *isms*, in politics—latitudinarianism, deism, atheism, in place of religion—and phonetic writing in place of etymology and lawful spelling.”

Some one, I believe at the secret instigation of Mr. Pfeffer, here ventured to hint that the age had at least something to boast of in the invention of railroad travelling, and steam-ship navigation.

“Why, I don’t know,” continued the vicar, “whether even on those subjects there is real ground for congratulation. We did very well without rail-roads and steam-ships during my early time—very well indeed—and we might have continued to do well. This is an iron age:—the iron machinery of your mills and manufactories has driven the spinning wheel and the knitting needles from the homes of our peasantry; and the plain, and the hill, and the valley, feel the unnatural pressure. Give me the comfortable, social travelling of the old-stage coach: passengers are now packed together for a hundred miles into compartments, and know one another no more at the end than at the beginning of the journey:—never once, in the whole course of it, do they take a social meal, or have opportunity to acknowledge the obligation of the ἀλς θεῖος. Should the heartless whizz cease for ten minutes, and allow the kindly buzz of some hundreds of human voices to take its place, with grateful change, during the time you hurry about the crowded station with a pretence to refresh,—the iron bell and iron road soon bear you off again,

and, instead of the warm, comfortable, bustling, mirthful inn of other days, too populous to miss any one company of its ever-changing guests—you leave behind you a silence, a solitude, deep and awful as of the grave itself. Yes, yes—I perceive what you are going to say—I acknowledge that the change had in some degree begun even before rail-roads. The time allowed for dining had already been nefariously abridged—in my father's day, it had always been a full hour. But so it is:—from bad to worse is the history of human life!

*‘Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit
Nos nequiores mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore.’*

“The end of that history for the world at large, is but too plain, and the rail-way itself too apt an emblem of it. You take your place, and you read on the wooden mile-post — (not stone as heretofore)—you read the contraction—(everything is contracted and abridged in these hurrying days)—you read ‘50 miles to L;’—whizz, whizz,—a minute scarcely elapses,—and you read, if your eyes can catch the characters, ‘49 miles to L;’ whizz, whizz again, and in another minute ‘48 miles to L:’—you have only to aspirate the name of the letter as a cockney would do, and you learn whither the world is hastening, and at what rate it is going.”

My memory does not serve me to recollect more early specimens of our vicar's mode of talking, when opinions or practices of modern growth were the subjects of conversation; but I believe the foregoing example may stand for all others that occurred in the

intervening years. The fact is this, that the memory is never able to treasure, as a part of its stores, what lies beyond the grasp of the understanding at the time. I can remember, as being within the reach of a child's intellect, the conversations, or rather the communications, of young Harry to me, even so far back as when we were only six years of age. He was a very uncommon child, and feeling this fact from our earliest companionship, I often listened to him with a sort of awe. Nearly up to our twelfth year, we slept, if not always in the same bed, yet always in the same room. This was not in the dormitory over the school,—a long room having a bed-chamber at each end, slightly partitioned off for the two resident assistants,—but in the house “over the way,” as we were accustomed to call it in school. I was a very sound sleeper, turning perhaps once in the course of the night, but never waking, and never conscious, unless Harry disturbed me:—he, on the contrary, was an incessant dreamer, often rising from his bed and walking about the room, the windows and doors of which were in consequence always carefully fastened. Excitability of the nervous system, liable to sudden relaxation or collapse, was, I believe, remarkable in him:—I think his temperament was what they call, sanguineo-nervous. Yet was he a very healthy and very fine child in appearance, of a clear though dark complexion, and taller, at eight years of age, by half a head than I was, although two months younger. In the morning when I was as wakeful as the lark, and disposed to be as merry, I often found him, though awake also, in a kind of dreamy state, and fixing my

attention by some extraordinary remark or revelation. “Frank,” said he on one of these occasions, when we were about six years old,—“I say, Frank,—do you know, I can remember when I first began.” “What, when you were born?” “No; I don’t know anything about that: I used to ask my own nurse that’s gone to heaven where they brought me from, and what I was before that; and I asked your mamma; but nurse would not tell me, and your mamma would not;—they put me off with some nonsense; and your mamma says only married people have children; but you know Peggy had a little baby, and she was not married, and your mamma turned her away for it. But though they won’t let me know anything about being born, I remember when I first knew that I was myself. Why how you stare, Frank! don’t you know what I mean? I was cold and hungry, and I knew I could be warm and not hungry, and so I cried *on purpose* because I wasn’t where I could be warm, and where I could suck. I dare say I had often been cold and hungry before, but I did not know it then, and if I cried, it wasn’t on purpose, but only because I couldn’t help crying, just as Peggy’s baby cried the same day it was found in her bed:—how could it have come in her bed, Frank?”

And if my companion’s retrospective revelations were remarkable, some of his dreams seemed almost to reveal the future: at least, such is the impression they now have upon my mind, acquainted as I am with what has since taken place. “Frank,” said he one morning, “I have been dreaming such a funny dream—no, not funny exactly—but I’ll tell you. I

saw Peggy's baby come out of the ground—do you think we come out of the ground, Frank? And then it wasn't Peggy's baby, but another one; and it grew till it was as big as your sister Sophy,—but it wasn't Sophy; for Sophy came afterwards all so bright and shining, and looked at me; while the baby that had grown as big as she, asked me to come down with her to see the pretty things under ground; and then Sophy seemed to be further and further from me, till she was nothing but a bright little star. And I went with my new playmate under ground, where we ran about like rabbits, and were so warm and so merry; and we put our arms round one another, and I looked in her face, and then I saw she was all spots, and presently her arms round my neck felt soft and nasty, and I felt myself nasty too; but I didn't mind it; so I kept along with her, and went on playing, and I should have been playing with her still, if you hadn't pulled the clothes off me, Frank."

I ventured, in the beginning of this chapter, to hint at the difficulties which beset the question of education, one of the chief of which, is the variability of those who are to be subjected to its forming power. What, for instance, was the education fit for such a child as Harry, so peculiarly gifted, and so *constituted*? Ask twenty theorists, and you would most likely get as many systems in answer, and all of them plausible. Mr. Gordon's was plausible, but we shall soon see how it began to work. Mr. Pfeffer was for acting on phrenological principles. "You see, Sir," he would say, "when Harry is quite himself, what are the organs in predominant activity,—Hope, Benevo-

lence, Veneration, Ideality, Wit,—in short all the organs at, and near the top of the skull: to these, the animal organs, alimentiveness, combativeness, and so forth, at the back and lower sides of the skull,—along with the intellectual organs in front of it, are, during the sovereignty of the first mentioned, entirely subservient. Then what have we to do but to keep up this condition of our pupil, and render the state which, at present, through Mr. Gordon's management (very pernicious management I must say) is not permanent,—what have we to do but, by all the means we can apply, to render it habitual?"

My father was sure to laugh when Mr. Pfeffer spoke of the phrenological organs as ascertained certainties. "Well, Mr. Pfeffer," he would answer, "I dare say your doctrine will turn out to be right; but you and your brethren must work hard at the collection of facts before we can permit Phrenology to take its stand among the inductive sciences. In the mean time, why do you not extend your mode of nomenclature to other parts of the animal frame—why, for instance, instead of calling the eyes the organs of seeing, do you not call them the double organ of Seeingness? why are not the legs the double organ of Walkingness? and the feet the double organ of Kickingness? I am quite aware that you refer these effects to the brain, without which, the effects could not, by means only of the eyes, and the legs, and the feet, have existence: but if you refer these and other effects to the brain, you must remember that others go higher still, and refer all the actions of man, whether of thought, or of sense, or of bodily act, to a

substance called MIND, altogether distinct from the matter which constitutes his body. You know that I am not of the number of those who thus oppose your doctrine ; but nevertheless, admitting your doctrine as a fair general hypothesis unproved in its details, I have to say that, for practical ends, there is nothing new in it. With regard to Harry, for instance, I come to the same conclusions as yourself, but from premises which, at least in enunciation, are different. According to almost all preconceived opinions, there is a trinity in our human nature,—a trinity I say in man, esteemed nevertheless one undivided being,—as in the belief of our church there is a trinity in the divine nature—a trinity in God, esteemed nevertheless one undivided being. Indeed, it is worth remarking that even in his form and in his temperament, we discern in man a threefold structure, so that if the parts which unite in the structure are not equally balanced, if one is predominant, and the other two relatively weak, peculiarity of character or of constitution will follow. First, as to man's form—the head, the chest, and the belly, pretty nearly make up that form :—now, let the head be too much for the other two parts, and you will have an individual too shrewdly intellectual for the rest of his species :—let the chest predominate, and you will have a man of too much ardour and animal power :—let the belly rule the other parts, and you have the grovelling sensualist. Secondly, as to man's temperament, I believe physicians consider it to be made up of blood, and bile, and serum, the predominance of each of which gives, first, the sanguine constitution, secondly

the hot and fibrous one, and thirdly a constitution lymphatic and flaccid. But I am wandering from my purpose:—the trinity in man which I intended to insist on, belongs to psychology and not to physiology. When his Maker breathed into his nostrils the breath of LIFE, he gave him SOUL and INTELLECT (or, as some phrase it, SOUL and MIND) included in that LIFE; a tri-une being which He enabled him, by leaving his Will free, so to rule, that the lower elements of life and intellect should be subject to the Soul or higher element. When this subjugation is accomplished, which cannot be without much struggle against the animal impulses of our nature,—a struggle more severe to some than to others, if the physiological differences among men are really such as have just been intimated,—when, I repeat, by more or less exertion of the free Will, this subjugation is accomplished, *the Soul is saved*; but if the Will give way, the Soul is perilled or lost. All this, you are quite aware, my dear Mr. Pfeffer, is old doctrine among our most esteemed theologians; and yet, what does your phrenology put forth, but the same thing in a different way? Give exercise to the intellectual organs in connexion only with the animal propensities of our nature, and what do we make the man but the most cunning of brutes? Subject that intellect to the soul,—in other words to the aspiration after the perfect good which cannot be realized here on earth,—the organs of which, embracing faith, and hope, and charity, you assign to the top and the adjoining sides of the skull,—and you have a man in a state of preparation for another and a better world, by using the

pleasures of this, only as the prudent traveller avails himself of the necessary refreshments provided for living on the road which leads to his destined place of rest."

It was a pleasure to listen to argument between Mr. Pfeffer and my father, so entirely different was it in tone and character from ordinary argumentation. In other instances, you seldom fail to perceive that the parties spar with a sense of injury,—the injury of not holding another's opinion in respect. And then you see, when the contention begins, that each disputant, like a boxer, only becomes more and more incensed, in proportion to the blows he receives, and strives more and more, not to be reconciled, but to be victorious. On the contrary, an argument between my father and his young friend, always, as it went on, brought them nearer and nearer to an agreement with each other. My father used to say, that with our present weak faculties and limited field of observation, it was impossible that any one man should see Truth in her full proportions: each could but get a glimpse of her, and that glimpse would differ according to the point of view which the observer was able to take. To quarrel with a man because his point of view is different from our own, is evidently very irrational:—had we not better change places for a moment and see if the two points of view cannot be reconciled? Such was the persuasion which guided my father in every discussion with his friends, and, if he had any, with his foes also: but with this statement, I must repeat a remark I have already made, that this lenient tolerance of others' opinions, ren-

dered him something irresolute in carrying out his own. After all, for determination of purpose and energy of action, we must go to the bigot; and though a man may no doubt evince these qualities without being a bigot, I am afraid my father had not so far perfected his character. He permitted Mr. Gordon still to keep young Harry under his influence, satisfying himself with counteracting that influence by partial expedients, instead of taking the child entirely into his own hands. The effect was, that Harry in his eleventh year, namely in the spring of 1836, was visited by a severe nervous fever,—I say the effect; for though it is possible the cause might have been other than Mr. Gordon's management, yet we could not help thinking that the taxing of the child's brain with studies unfit for it, was quite sufficient to account for the disease. It lasted six weeks, during the greater part of which he was delirious, and his incoherent talk now revealed another influence which had been at work on his too susceptible nature. In trying to form his character, by bringing the remarkable, and separately excellent elements of his frame into consonancy and unity of action, *religion*, as a supreme motive, had not been forgotten. My father's religion was such as might be expected from so candid and kind a man,—practical rather than speculative, truly Christian in the former respect, and, in the latter, making ample allowance for differences of opinion among Christians. One point he held was this,—that as men could not be brought to a common agreement on the subject of religion, further than that religion is necessary as a leading motive of action; so

neither could it with safety be presented in the same aspect to all,—for instance, to the timid and humble-minded, and to the arrogant and assured. With regard to this child committed unconditionally to his care and instruction,—this inquisitive, susceptible, impressible child,—so eager after knowledge, so quick in reaching it, and yet so diffident of his own perceptions and ever ready to lean upon others,—this child, he at once saw, required the most delicate management, in order that religion might meet him as a friend, and not as a bugbear. Measuring others by himself, and persuaded that in such a case they could not but act with him, my father was blind to the fact that even in his own drawing-room, a contrary influence was frustrating his plan. Some good ladies (such ladies are always called good) who were frequent visitors to my mother, struck by the remarkable acquirements of the precocious-minded child, were, as they said to one another, determined to rescue him from the power of Satan ; and, without allowing my mother to be aware of their confederacy, (at least, I cannot but think so,) contrived in turn, as each paid her separate visit, to engage the child's attention, and to imbue his mind with what they considered godly and wholesome terrors. The effect was but too apparent during his month of delirium, "Hell was opened for him, and Satan ready to seize his prey. Whither should he flee from the wrath of God, child of reprobation as he was."—Cries to this purpose, in all the agony of terror, were mingled with allusions to his cast-off condition on earth,—a fact which we imagined had never entered

into the ordinary currents of his thought, though we now discovered that it must have lain deep and heavy in his heart: "I was cast off by my father on earth," he would cry, "and my mother denied me her breasts; and now I am rejected by my Father in heaven, and his Son refuses to plead for me."

Harry had never been ill before, and this very severe attack filled the whole family with the greatest alarm. Our regular medical attendant, a very sensible and experienced man, declined to take upon himself the sole direction of the case, and the two physicians of the neighbourhood were sent for to act with him, and take their share of the responsibility and of the fees. It was notorious that the little patient's estate could well bear the expense of the very best medical attendance; and the family apothecary took care that he should have it. No one better knew the skill of the two M.D.'s of the county town of A.: and they on their part fully admitted the ability of the general practitioner who exercised his calling around and in the village of B. As in the earlier times of England when Dan Chaucer wrote, so in the present case,

Full ready had they their apothecaries
To send in drugs and make electuaries;
And each of them made other for to win:
Their friendship was no new thing to begin.

Prol. to the Canterbury Tales.

My father would have preferred by far the unassisted attendance of the apothecary, who, as I have intimated, was a man of great experience, and a clear head: his practical alleviatives while the fever lasted,

and his restoratives, when it ended, would have been much more to the purpose, than the means prescribed by the *science* of the two doctors ; but so it was that Harry, throughout his whole life, was the doomed subject of experiments, which, for one purpose or another, every one thought it proper to make upon him ; and it cannot be concealed that the reason of so much interest, was the well understood fact, that the child was rich. I have often busied myself with imagining what a different history his life would have been, if this fact had not been known till he became of age. Could his mysterious parents have so managed their otherwise well-concerted plan, that their child's wealth should not have been known till he was old enough to take possession of it, one person only of our family, namely my father, being cognizant of the true circumstances,—how different a history would my young friend's life have supplied from that which I am about to give ! I am supposing that my father would have had strength of mind to keep such a secret to himself ; and I believe he would : but under actual circumstances we all knew that Harry would be rich ; and my father found it next to impossible to act on his own views in his management of the child, in opposition to those who had their own ends to carry by a different management. Thus, before the consequences were seen in the nervous fever which followed it, he could not, without the exertion of more authority than his good-nature allowed, put a decided stop to Mr. Gordon's metaphysical indoctrination of the almost infant pupil. But the antecedent circumstances would not have occurred, if Harry had been known only as

a boy of ordinary plebeian means :—the worthy Scotchman would not, in such case, have troubled himself to set about ennobling the mind of the pupil by freeing it, to the utmost, from the trammels of the body : such service to a pupil of plebeian hopes, would have been unnecessary. Let it be supposed, however, that the fever was not the consequence of overtaking the pupil's brain with knowledge unfit for it, but that it took place as an unavoidable effect of some constitutional development, still I am of opinion that if Harry had not been known to be rich, he would have been restored from his fever and from its effects, far more quickly, and far more effectually than really happened. Medical science, in spite of all the outcry against empiricism, is, after all, nothing but a record of empiricism ; and the partial and particular empiric, if he is familiar with the constitution of the patient, is sure to be a better doctor in the case, than any who proceed on general principles, to which the case in hand may be an exception. Now, Harry's constitution was a remarkable idiosyncrasy ; and I presume to say that my father and the family apothecary would have managed the matter far better without the two doctors, than with them. Harry, however, did get through the fever in spite of the two extra doctors ; but then came the inquiry, how he was to be managed during his convalescence. My father's plan would have been, to occupy the child's thoughts with other subjects than those to which Mr. Gordon had habituated him,—with history, with poetry, and even with fairy tales : but the doctors prescribed separation for a time from all learning whatever ; and if they had further prescribed

a temporary separation from the school itself, and a cheerful change of scene, the prescription might have answered. But here my mother's policy interfered, who did not like Harry to go where he might acquire new associations ; and so the child, being left to himself with nothing at all to do but what he had been in the habit of doing, fell back, as often as he was left alone, and that was necessarily very often, into his habit of moping abstraction. I have said that previously to his illness, whenever he was in such a fit, his only pleasure, beside thought, seemed to be eating and drinking ; and now, when the exhaustion caused by the fever rendered his appetite enormous, it might be said of him, except when the hours of play restored him for a time to his companions and himself, that he was a child without either merriment or sadness, hope or fear, love or aversion,—a little mortal shut up within himself, that sought nothing from without but his breakfast, his luncheon, his dinner, his tea, his supper, and his warm bed at night when he could eat and drink no longer. His habits, I am persuaded, would have been very different, had they grown upon him without the interference of which his wealth was the cause. But in all circles, small as well as large, there are politicians, who, as Hamlet says, “would circumvent Heaven.” And, by the way, I never recur to the picture which our great painter furnishes of the moody, philosophic, accomplished, high-principled, and amiable prince of Denmark, without being reminded of the friend whose memoir I am writing. If the similarity in the general features of the two characters should not, as I go on, strike others as well as myself,

it will be owing to my inability to draw my friend's portrait to the life.

The wealth which gave Harry so much importance in the eyes of others, produced no self-congratulation in the child. On the contrary, he would willingly have given it all away ; for he felt that he should then be loved for himself. As it was, though no mother could more anxiously watch over a child than my mother did over him, yet she always took care to let him know that he was not her child. Poor Harry ! every other boy in the school had a father, a mother, a brother, or a sister, who sometimes called to see him, or if, as was the case with far the great majority of our pupils, those dear relations were in other lands, at least, their frequent letters came, which were shown about the schoolroom with pleasure and pride. If Harry had not been wealthy, he would never have been exposed, by the comparison with those around him, to the sense of desolation which he felt. My mother, from his earliest years would have allowed him to call her by the same name that I called her, I should have been his brother, and *Sophy would have been his sister* : it was the calculation of this last-mentioned effect which kept Harry, while a child, not certainly from the external comforts of home, but from the sweet inward persuasion that he was himself a part of it. But then these further consequences would have followed :—he would have been sent, when the time arrived, to Oxford or Cambridge to complete his education, where his uncommon talents would have been sure to procure him University honours :—his Southern constitution might perhaps have hurried him,

while there, into some early excesses ; but on coming of age, his good principles would have told him how to correct and avoid them in future : he would have looked out for a suitable partner for life, and with honours and wealth on his side, the field of choice would have been as extensive as could be wished ; he would probably have fallen in love some fifty times or more before he had fixed and proposed ; for so is a man likely to do where the scope for it occurs, while, of a *woman's* heart, the property is, to fix itself once and for ever : he would, however, have fixed his choice at last, and I cannot doubt but his choice would have been a worthy one. Thus established in life, my friend, Harold Fremdling, would, at the moment I am now writing, have been, I do not in the least doubt, a man of high mark in this country, to whose adoption his parents had consigned him—consigned him, it is probable, with this very hope, and with the intention on one side, or on both, to join him when the lustre of his name might throw out of regard the blemish, if any, of his birth. So much for *Harry's* future : but what in the mean time would have been *ours* at home ? First for Mr. Gordon,—he would not have been now exercising his calling of schoolmaster with those eminent advantages which he enjoys : it must have been in a more humble way ; and *I* should have been the schoolmaster, with those advantages in my favour which my father had secured by a life of honourable toil. But then I should not have been able to claim, except by courtesy, the designation which I have affixed to my name in the title-page of this work. Lastly, with regard to my poor sister—I cannot think

of her without a rush of tears into my eyes—*she* would have been the wife of a man,—not of riches certainly, but fitted by every other natural and acquired endowment to render the wife of his choice a happy woman ; —a man who, under actual circumstances, is connected with me by a dear and tender tie, but who would have stood in still more close connection, had the events I am supposing been allowed to come to pass.—But a truce to these calculations of what *would* have been,—my business is to state what *has* been, and to bring up my narrative to what really *is* : and I have to beg my reader's pardon for having so far digressed.

I have already made it known that my sister Sophia was nearly two years younger than Harry and myself. Looking back to the time just before he fell ill of the fever, I can remember her, in her eighth year, a delicate sylph-like child, with flaxen locks, a fair transparent complexion, and the true Saxon mild blue eye. Her disposition was correspondent : yielding and pliant, it sought support from others ; and her trust in, and affection for those around her, were unbounded. She was easily swayed by kindness even against her inclination ; and so sensitive to reproof, that a harsh word from any she loved—and she loved all whom she knew—would make her sob for an hour as if her heart were bursting. Such was the child that was growing up the playmate of two robust boys, the taller and more developed of the two, being, as I have said, two months the younger. With me whose neck she could clasp when I was quite upright, by only standing a little on tip-toe, she was an unrestrained romp ; but she was habituated to more reserve in

gambolling with Harry. She did not love him less, but she admired him more: she thought him, as indeed he was, immensely clever in all the little contrivances which our games required: he seemed to her sometimes like this, and sometimes like the other prince whom she read of in fairy tales; probably her dreams had confounded him with these personages during the sleep of the previous night. And I have no doubt she treasured these impressions when she was absent from home for a time, which happened occasionally, by her being sent every now and then to stay for a month or so with our aunt, who lived at a distance. My recollection of these events, though generally faint, retains, here and there, some distinct traces of the things then said and done. I remember, for instance, at one time, when Sophy had just returned from a rather long visit to her aunt, and Harry and I were talking to her in the same style, and with the same sort of indulgent superiority, which we used toward the very little boys in the school,—I remember my saying to her—"Well, Sophy, do you say your prayers as prettily as you used to do?"—(Boys are less easily imbued with religious feeling than girls: in Sophia I knew the sentiment to be strong; from her infancy it had been so; she craved support for the weakness she felt; she had been taught that there is one great support for one and for all; and, child though she was, she fell back upon *that*, when she most mistrusted herself. I knew all this, though I could not then have explained what I knew in words; and I wished to laugh at her. My purpose was evident; but she was too meek to chide—too

fearful of Harry's concurrence to answer as she felt ; so she was silent :)—" Bless papa, bless mamma, bless brother Frank—is not that it, Sophy ?"—Still she was silent, but she looked assent. " Very well ; all good girls pray for their fathers, and mothers, and brothers ; but don't you pray for Harry too ?" She looked at Harry with a smile that was half inclined to be a tear ; for she recollected at one time when she had said " bless brother Harry," her mamma had told her so seriously as almost to make her cry, that Harry was not her brother. Yet her look seemed to say that she did pray for him ; and therefore I continued my bantering questions. " Well, but how do you pray for him ? because you know, Sophy, that he's no relation at all : come, let us hear what you say." " Of course she prays for me," said Harry with far less of banter in his tone, " because she prays for all her friends, and all her enemies ; and I must be among one or the other, you know."—I cannot tell what was the point in particular that touched her in all this ; but her heart had gradually swelled with its emotions, as appeared by the burst of tears that followed. The next quarter of an hour was spent in sobs on her part, and repentant kisses on mine :—in another quarter of an hour, all was forgotten.

CHAPTER IV.

DANGERS OF THE TEENS, IN THE COUNTRY.

WHEN the two extra doctors had made their last visits, and Harry was restored to Greek and Latin, Poetry, Music, and the Playground, his advancement from day to day in health, strength, and growth, was surprising. In the last respect, he soon shot up to almost his intended height, which settled finally at five feet eleven. I must confess that at this period he had lost his boyish beauty, and, being not yet a man, he could not boast of the symmetry which was to come, but exhibited a somewhat gawky form. That he had lost nothing, by his fever, of nervous sensibility, will be easily conceived; neither had he lost anything of his aptitude for learning of every kind: on the contrary, he mastered all that was taught him, and all that he set himself to learn, with a facility which left competition, and consequently envy, at a distance:—no one pretended to compete with Harry. In the accomplishments, he not only surprised, but almost outdid his masters. He was not much encouraged in his practice of music, my father having an old-fashioned Chesterfield notion, that a fiddler and a gentleman could scarcely be joined in

one person ; though he acknowledged that the union was far more possible than that of a gentleman and a horse-jockey. Harry was therefore permitted to acquire the practice of the violoncello, rather as an introduction to the science of music, than a practical end. In drawing and painting he was not restricted, and his taste and proficiency delighted all who were competent judges. The pursuits thus alluded to were pressed upon his attention, and all study of an abstruse or metaphysical character sedulously placed out of his way. But the mischief had been done—the habit had been established. Whether it was original nature in Harry, or whether Mr. Gordon's indoctrination was the cause, certain it is that Harry was a metaphysician, at a time when boys of his age are quite incompetent to entertain such questions as enter into metaphysics. The symptom was unhealthy : nature will not allow herself to be forced ; or if she herself is too forward, she requires her forwardness to be retarded, not accelerated. The effect in Harry's case was this,—that he had two distinct existences, and the one, after it had been predominant for a time with an intensity not easily described, broke under that intensity, and sunk into the other. The other, indeed, never at present continued long : it gave way to the natural buoyancy of youth, which resumed its sway ; but the further consequences, as time should draw on, might have awakened our liveliest fears, had we then been able to calculate the consequences. To speak more plainly,—this was the effect I allude to : for a week or ten days, this remarkable youth would join in all the pursuits of his companions with a relish so ex-

quisite, that every one yielded to him the place of leader ; and if poetry, or painting, or music, came in question, he proved at once, by their effect upon him, the delicacy of his feelings and his taste. Mr. Pfeffer, making use of a Greek epithet, which was familiar to German critics at that time, though not yet used or much used by our own, was accustomed to say of Harry while he was in this state of pleasurable excitement, that it was his *æsthetic* state. But then this state, in proportion to its intensity, gave way, sooner or later, to a day of morbid abstraction ; and so surely was this expected, that when Harry was not, as usual, forthcoming in the playground, the expression was—"Oh ! Harry is moping to day : it is of no use going after him." This was what the German teacher called Harry's *metaphysic* state. If any one did go after him, he would be found in some comfortable corner, his eyes in that peculiar state which belongs to *réverie*, as if they had been turned round in their sockets, and were looking *in*, instead of *out*, while his whole frame was disposed to quiescence instead of action. A question to him would, in this case, bring a repetition of the old story of Diogenes in his tub. "Harry, ar'n't you well?" "Yes, very well, and very comfortable : leave me alone." "Can we do anything for you?" "Stand out of my sunshine,"—or something to like purpose would be his answer, and there the colloquy would end. I was the only one in the school that could draw him out a little more when he was in one of these morbid fits, and the following is a specimen of such conversation as then took place.

“ Well, Harry, come and play with us. What’s the use of your moping here ?”

“ And what would be the use of my playing there ? I should only be tiring myself.”

“ Why you know what fun we had yesterday at Hide-and-seek, when none of them could find us, and we were crouched down in the corner while they were passing close by us, hardly able to keep ourselves from laughing outright.”

“ It was very stupid to be crouched down in such a place. Isn’t it much better to be sitting here at my ease ?”

“ Oh well ! if you don’t like to play at Hide-and-seek, come and have a game at Fives. There’s Monro, boasting that he and Thompson beat us yesterday, and he says he could beat us any time ; though you know it was only by accident.”

“ I don’t care about it if he did beat us : I was not a bit the thinner for it, and if I beat him to day, I should not be the fatter. I don’t gain anything by beating him.”

“ Why, you don’t wish to play for money, do you ?”

“ No, I hate money, except so far as I suppose I must have some to keep me comfortable. If I had all the money in the world, I couldn’t eat or drink more than another, at least to do me good.”

“ Well, if you won’t come and play with us, then go over to Sophy. She wants you to practise that duet with her that you said was the prettiest you ever heard.”

“ No, I sha’n’t go. Music is only a noise ; and if

I want a noise I can go and sit where the carpenters are at work, making your father's picture-room larger."

"Oh! by the by, Harry, there was a picture came down from London yesterday that you have not seen. Such a sweet thing! It's the Golden Age; all so sunshiny and so happy, with cool bowers, and groves, and rivulets, and natural grottos, and shepherds playing on pipes, and beautiful nymphs reposing in the shades, or sporting about in the groves without any clothes on."

"The more shame for them, unless they couldn't get clothes, and then they are the more to be pitied. It's all nonsense about the Golden Age, and nymphs, and such sort of people. If the nymphs have no clothes, they have no pockets, and consequently no pocket-handkerchiefs, though they must want to blow their noses sometimes, and do all other things that we do. I think it must have been a very nasty life to be running about naked in woods without pocket-handkerchiefs, and all such comforts and conveniences as we have. Don't you think so?"

"Why, I don't know. All I know, is, that in the picture, everything looks quite sunny, and beautiful, and happy. So, you wont come, Harry?"

"No, I am much better here with nothing to keep me company but my own thoughts."

"But what is it you can be thinking of, Harry:—I wish you would tell me."

"You would not understand me if I did tell you. I can go back in my thoughts, and feel and think as I did when I first knew that I was myself, by knowing there was something that was not myself. That was

Nurse, though I then knew her only as something different, not in what way she was different. I can then carry on my thoughts so as to feel and think as I did when I was a year older, and things had come a little into the shapes they now seem to have; and so I can go on, and make out how I came to my present way of feeling and thinking."

"And what's the use of all this?"

"The first use is that I am doing what I like to do, and the second is, that I find out what confusion people make by taking words for things."

"How do you mean?"

"Why, for instance, by taking such words as *matter* and *mind* for anything more than words. Your father set me a thinking on that subject, and I am sure he is quite right. I can call as many things as I like by the name *matter*, and it is very convenient to be able to do so; but I don't make them better known, one from another, by so calling them:—on the contrary I confuse their differences. There is no such thing as matter, as a distinct and peculiar thing, and so the word *matter* is only a word."

"How funny it is, Harry, that you should be so much wiser than other people. It seems all nonsense to me, so I won't stay any longer. Good b'ye till dinner-time."

The proper place of metaphysics in the circle of the sciences is not yet universally agreed upon. Hence, when an epithet was required to distinguish one from the other of the two states of existences which this remarkable boy exhibited, it would seem to many—perhaps to most people—that *not* the state of thought

in which the world and its realities loses all the hues which at other times it borrows from imagination, should be called a metaphysic state,—on the contrary, it might be said, when we have nature bare and unadorned before us, the view we take may be called physical ;—so that if the epithet *metaphysic* is to be applied to one of the two states in question, it should rather be to that in which we *transcend nature*, and live among things that have the colouring which only the soul can lend them. All this is plausible, and a part of that conception which, up to recent times, and even now, in Germany, assigns to metaphysics the task of inquiring about things transcendental,—things that cannot be examined but by the light of pure reason, distinct from the understanding which is able to recognise only the things of time and space. Such was not the conception of metaphysics with the humble doctors of our little college ; for even Mr. Gordon did not, with regard to the legitimate purpose of metaphysics, differ widely from Mr. Pfeffer, now that the latter had renounced Kant and his followers. That purpose, in the conception of our doctors, was the examination of the soundness of all the other sciences as from our eminence above them, with reference to the true end of all science, namely, the improvement and application of our powers for the ends of our being. It is the *science of the sciences*. In a cyclopedia, it should *not stand among* the sciences, but at the head of them. It ought to show us how knowledge begins, what it is, in what directions we can increase it, and in what paths knowledge being impossible, we must be led only by *ignes fatui* in attempting to reach it.

Now, with regard to the extraordinary subject of this memoir, if, in his moody fits, his thoughts were occupied in the way which he tried to explain to me, it cannot be denied, that according to the foregoing conception of metaphysics, Harry's state of thought, or existence for the time, was a *metaphysic* state : what was remarkable in the case, and justly excited much misgiving, was, that such a state should be familiar to a boy. In one so young it was evidently premature ; it argued something wrong in nature or in habit, something disturbed from its true place in the economy of the growing man. Could we correct the disturbance ? or must we await its effect in the man confirmed, before we decidedly pronounced it either an evil or a good ? What we did was to hesitate ; and so time went on, and events took the shape which circumstances produced.

But these circumstances were not altogether left to Providence. Had that been the case, and the management of Harry such only as was conceived to be best, irrespective of any one's interest but his own, I cannot help thinking that no mischief would have arisen out of the remarkable duality of existence which his boyhood exhibited, but that the two states would in time have harmonized, and events taken the course, which, in the last chapter, I imagined was clearly within the limits of reasonable calculation. Now, I do not say that the expedients in our family, which tended to "circumvent Heaven," carried in their complexion any strong marks of designing wickedness : very far from this, they might plead the excuse of perfect harmlessness of intention : still they had their effects ;

just as we see in many more important matters, that antecedents apparently small, are followed by consequences of awful moment. There appeared, for instance, no great harm in a frequent repetition of the joke in the presence of the two little ones, Harry and Sophy, while they were yet infants, that, by and by, they were to be married: nor even now, when one was a great overgrown boy, and the other a slender girl that could walk under his arm without stooping, did there seem much cause for censure when the same joke was repeated. Harry laughed at it as a saying that meant nothing; and we had no evident reason for supposing that Sophy thought more of it than Harry. But a very few years would produce a great change. Harry, born of parents the natives of a southern clime, gave indications of a much earlier maturity than happens to youths in our latitudes; and Sophia, though at present a child, soon appeared, when at intervals we visited her at my aunt's, to have left, at every new visit, a little of the mere girl behind her.

And so months went on, and the seasons followed their usual course; nor did any event accompany their changes which is worth recording, unless it be that Harry and I, at holiday-times, were allowed to accept invitations for visits, of a few days on each occasion, to the house of the gentleman standing at the head of the very respectable firm, that had the management, and some share of the usufruct, of Harry's property. It is true that while we were boys, London never pleased us long. We were excited for a time by the change of scene; but after two or three days

of sight-seeing, we were always glad to leave the smoke and noise behind, and return to the green fields, the fresh air, and the broad sky, associated as they were with our habitual sports and enjoyments. But change is always acceptable to youth, and these journeys to London were subjects of pleasing anticipation long before the times for them came round.

Very soon, however, it was thought necessary to interrupt these visits to the all-absorbing metropolis. I remember that before the time of an expected invitation, a great deal of anxious talking occurred between my father and mother; and I was not slow to discover that Harry was the subject. There had always been cause for anxiety on his account, but now there seemed additional cause. About completing his fourteenth year, he was no longer a boy, but a very handsome though slender young man. His eyes seemed to have in them a greater expression, his other features assumed a correspondent character, his hair had become something darker, and a moustache luxuriantly fringed his upper lip. In the meantime, I, though rather older, was still but a boy, and so I continued beyond more than one following birthday. Yet was I the senior of every one in the school, and all the rest, excepting Harry, were boys like myself. I may observe in this place that most of our pupils left us before their sixteenth year, their destination being either to the countinghouse, or to one of the East India colleges. The effect therefore was, that Harry was now without a suitable companion; an effect which, as my father saw, it was very desirable to remedy; but how was it to be remedied without in-

terfering with the policy of his own hearth, to which he had now begun to lend himself? With regard to what ought to have been done, looking back as I now do upon the past, there is but one answer:—this young man should, for a time at least, have been placed in some other circle, much wider, and much more diversified within its limits, than ours was at the time; a circle in which he might have found companions of both sexes, trained up, as the youth of our country are trained, if not in all circles, at least in many that may be found: and here would his new feeling have been subjected to that refining process, which raises it above our animal nature to become a part of the soul; blending it, in Harry's case, with what, after Mr. Pfeffer, I have called his æsthetic existence, and rendering any delight from it next to impossible except when so blended and so refined. While forming part of such a circle, there would have been no reason to regret if his affections should not have permanently rested on one opening flower, but have fluttered, where there were many sweet and beautiful, from one to another. Early indecision should be made, if possible, to accompany inevitable inexperience: it is time enough to fix the affections when the judgement is mature; and the judgement cannot mature itself but by opportunities of exercise. All this presupposes that the young are watched over by their elders, — not to dam up the current of their affection or turn it from its natural channel, but to guide it to a wholesome purpose. Harry was watched over, but alas! not with the view exclusively of what was best for him; and therefore what was best at this

critical part of his life, certainly was not done. He was suffered to feel the aching void that time had opened in his breast; to wander alone among the sweets of the opening spring, and discover that the love of beauty which they had hitherto satisfied, now only raised in his soul a greater thirst, but provided nothing to allay it: like his father Adam,

“In these
He found not what he wanted.”

One thing, indeed, was done by my father, and one step in the true direction was taken by my mother, to meet the case of my young friend, which I have thus endeavoured to make intelligible. My father provided him with a horse, and set him an example of scampering with it over all parts of our beautiful neighbourhood, that he might tire himself with wholesome exercise during the day, and bring sound sleep to his pillow during the night. My mother had periodical parties for music and dancing in her drawing-room; but I must observe that she was extremely circumspect in her invitations, and that on no occasion would it have been easy, in looking through the company she assembled, to find a lady that was at the same time very young and very beautiful. I am prevented, in stating this fact, from exhibiting my brotherly prejudice by excepting Sophia; for besides that, if she had been at home, she was still too young to be produced in company, I have further to state that, from a year before the time now in view, up to almost two years later, she was dwelling with my aunt, and that her interviews with the nearer members of the family

took place only when we went to see her, and not by reason of such visits as she and my aunt were formerly accustomed to pay to us.

At length, at the close of the year 1841, when Harry was on the point of completing his sixteenth year, and Sophia had lately counted her fourteenth, she came home to spend the Christmas holidays under the roof of her childhood. Previously to this, Harry had almost forgotten her, remembering her only as a pretty child he had seen some years ago—three years being a considerable space in the reckoning of one who has counted only sixteen. Sophia had not forgotten Harry, but retained a very lively image of him, as he had been during the time when he was the god of her infant idolatry. What Sophy now was, my boyish appreciation could not, at that period, have adequately said. I must call up my older judgement to describe her aright: but I had better not describe her at all, for what can a brother say that is not favourable to his sister? Yet I must declare, and I have the testimony of others to support me in my assertion,—that the first fresh dawn of womanhood has never been seen more lovely, more full of promise, more expressive of all that the heart desires in woman,—than it was then seen in her. Having premised thus much, I need not add that the meeting between these two young and eminently beautiful persons, who last parted as children, and now encountered each other's bashful gaze with an entire change of ideas and feelings, was a sight much more easily conceived than described. Sophia had seen me often during the intervening time, and as she knew me to be a little older than Harry,

she supposed she should find him a boy like myself: she was prepared, therefore, to salute him with sisterly familiarity. But when she saw him, and knew him to be the Harry of former days, however now transformed, the consciousness of the greeting she had purposed quite overwhelmed her, and she stood fixed for a time as strongly to the ground as a rose-tree, and exhibiting the rose in her mantling cheeks. He was still more confused than she. At first he mistrusted his eyes: he could not think it was Sophia; till the early-known features shone through those before him, and the blossoming woman recalled the memory of the interesting child. After this, nothing could be more respectful, nothing more shy, than their mutual greeting; and their shyness continued, so as to prevent any familiar intercourse for several days. Indeed, they had no opportunities of meeting, unless they had created them, except at meal-times, and during a couple of evening hours in the drawing-room: but full use was made, at least by Harry, of these short opportunities to gaze and wonder. On the first day, often did their eyes encounter, and as often were hers cast down with shame and confusion. Afterwards, she did not venture to look in the direction in which he sat, so that he was able to fix his eyes on her form without removing them; and he never did remove them from the time he sat down to table till he rose from it, neglecting his plate and running a fair chance of starving himself, except that I believe he contrived to get something between breakfast time and dinner, or dinner time and supper. The moment Sophy left the hall in which the meals were taken, he would run

over the way, and lock himself up for a time in his bed-room. This was in the dormitory: it had been expressly constructed for him by taking in more space to that which had been a long narrow chamber for Mr. Pfeffer; the whole of which increased space now yielded two very proportionable bed-rooms, by a partition at right angles to that which crossed the dormitory. Here, in the bed-room assigned to him, the other being Mr. Pfeffer's, he would lock himself up when he could no longer gaze upon Sophia: and though, after repeated summons, he would come out and go through the routine business of the day, it was evident that he had neither eyes, nor ears, nor thought, but for her. So evidently intense was the flame that was lighted up, that my father and mother, though they could not but be conscious they had permitted the train, were alarmed at the effect produced, which they never supposed would have been so sudden and so absorbing. As yet, however, it burned in secret. A few days more and it burst out. We had to make preparations for keeping Christmas. Several of the elder boys were invited for that week either to London or elsewhere, and only thirteen were left behind, including Harry and myself. His birth-day on the eighteenth had been kept with due honours, and with something of solemnity in Sophy's good wishes, and his reply. Christmas-day passed off very well, and the Sunday which followed it was observed as usual. Then came the Monday, on which we were promised a full enjoyment of all the gambols consecrated to Christmas. The dining-hall was cleared out for this especial purpose, our breakfast and dinner being on that day

taken in a smaller room ; and in the hall we assembled as soon as evening set in, quite ready to begin our sports, with a heartiness that only school-boys and school-girls can afford. Sophy was as ready as the rest to play her part, and forgot her fresh womanhood under the roof that had looked down on her infant and childish years, and now saw her in the midst of a circle of kindred spirits. She was pulled and hauled about, nothing loath, with as much boisterous mirth as the Sophy of old at farmer Flamborough's ; nor did she once turn her eyes to Harry, who was witnessing these proceedings with a mixture of torture and delight that I must leave the psychological chemist to analyze. For be it known that Harry, however he might burn to take his part in the boisterous play, did not once attempt to put himself forward for that purpose : he had a clear instinctive persuasion that the moment he should do so, Sophy would leave off. In the mean time he would not for worlds have lost the sight of Sophy, now pulled this way, and now that ; now dragged to the ground, and now hauled upon the sofa, and struggling to throw off her assailants. But Sophy was soon tired out, and desired some quieter game. " Forfeits " was agreed upon ; and as this, at the first part of it, is a sit-still game, requiring some mental ingenuity which was quite in Harry's line, he was at once asked to take a part in it. He did so ; and while he displayed his expected ability, he contrived to be mulcted almost as often as the rest. When the time came for redeeming the forfeits, and several feats had been performed in obedience to the conditions, a pledge of Harry's came to hand, and being as usual withheld

from sight, the cry was made in court, "What is he to do who owns this?" to which the judge, whose turn it was to pronounce, answered, "He is to go and kiss Sophy." And Harry *did* go and kiss Sophy. Claspings her round the waist, he brought his lips to hers with such madness of delight, with such wild rapture, giving her not one kiss but fifty in inconceivable quickness of time, that we youngsters, delighted at so much spirit, burst into our loudest laugh. But my father and mother did not laugh, nor did Sophia, nor did Harry: all four felt there was offence in the violence of the proceeding, and Harry not the least. I believe he was about to throw himself on his knees before Sophia and beg her pardon, when we, who had no understanding for the serious part of the affair, broke in between them with an exclamation that we would have a new game—we would play at parson and clerk; and as it was very well known Harry and Sophy were to be married, we would put up the banns. The only escape for Sophia from the meshes of this joke—this cruel joke, if its authors could have designed the cruelty—would have been to join in the laugh, and so keep it from being anything except a joke. But Sophy had lost her self-possession, and a new burst of violence from Harry brought the matter to a crisis: "Oh!" cried he, "that you could indeed marry us! that you could make Sophia mine—mine for ever!" Then recollecting that by such a wish, she not being an assenting party, he was doubling the offence already committed, he was seized with an inclination to weep, and would have wept if the source of his tears had not been dried by other emotions:—instead of tears, he

uttered convulsive sobs. Poor Sophy ! her tears were ready enough, and to hide the gush that immediately followed, she ran out of the room. My mother hurried after her, while my father came to Harry and drew him aside in order to hold him in serious talk. As to ourselves, to whom this tragic scene in the midst of our comedy was quite mysterious, we stood together in wondering silence, till my mother returned and told us Sophy would not come back again, though she was very well, and that we must continue our games without her. Harry would have said something to my mother, but she seemed to guess what it would be, and put a stop to it by declaring that Sophy could not be seen again that night. It was but early in the evening, yet Harry quitted us for his bed-room ; and we then continued our sports with recovered spirits, till the hour came when the general bed-room over the way received us also.

The next day, as soon as my mother could be seen, Harry presented himself before her, with a most energetic request, that he might be allowed to see Sophia, and beg her pardon for what had occurred on the previous evening. My mother told him there was no necessity for what he asked ; that the pardon was already granted on the understanding he would keep within the bounds of decorum for the future ; and that indeed Sophy had no time to spare, being obliged to return to her aunt, and to make preparations for doing so that very day : she would see Harry before she went just to say *adieu* ; but there was no time for a meeting on any other account. My mother, notwithstanding what she had so far seen of the

tempest of passion that had been raised in this young man's breast, was evidently ignorant of the little power she had to allay it. This new communication raised the tempest to its highest pitch. "Sophy could not, should not go till he had seen her and talked to her—seen her and talked to her alone;—nothing less could reconcile him to himself:—he was quite ready to die if this were not granted,—anybody might kill him; and if nobody would do so, he would kill himself." His phrensy (it was little less) alarmed my mother, who soon perceived that some concession was necessary; and recollecting that Sophy was at that moment in the greenhouse, and that the breakfast would be ready in half an hour, she told Harry that he might go to Sophy, and stay with her till the bell rung, recollecting while he was with her, that he would be overlooked though not overheard, "For I intend," said my mother, "to take my morning exercise up and down the walk that runs by the greenhouse." Thus permitted, Harry darted off to Sophia, and my mother began her walk. The half-hour was but as a few minutes to the young people, but to my mother it seemed as if it would never end. However, the breakfast bell rang at last, and my mother put her head into the greenhouse to remind the lovers of the fact, fully persuaded that without such notice, it would be altogether unheeded. But Sophia seemed quite ready for the call:—she put her arm at once within Harry's, who led her forth; and, following my mother to the breakfast table, they sat themselves down side by side, as if it had been their daily custom. Sophia was demurely tranquil: there was indeed a

glow of pleasure on her cheek, but it was the mild sunshine of a temperate morning in spring. Of a very different character was the expression of Harry's features: it was the wildness of excessive delight hardly able to contain itself, and the twinkling of his eye had something in it not altogether pleasurable to witness. The breakfast over, Sophia retired to her room, while Harry followed my mother into the parlour. "My dear Madam," he exclaimed, "I am so happy to tell you that Sophy and I have come to a complete understanding; so that I have no doubt you will write immediately to her aunt, and tell her she will not, under such circumstances, return."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried my mother, "why the boy is mad. Depend upon it, she *will* return to her aunt, and that without any delay. I am sure the understanding you have come to, be it what it will, cannot have made her forget what she owes to herself, to her aunt, and her parents. What promise has she made you?"

"A promise I can never forget, and I am sure it came from her heart,—a heart full of truth and goodness!"

"Well, but what was it? Let me know the words precisely; for I presume they have made too strong an impression not to be exactly registered."

"What she said in concluding all the other delightful revelations which we made to each other this morning—what she said at last was this, that happen what might, she never could, and never would, marry any other but me."

"A pretty sudden promise, considering how short

has been your new-revived acquaintanceship. But pray tell me, Mr. Logic, by what chain of consequences it follows from this promise, that she is not now to return to her aunt?"

"Why, I do not see how she can be mine, and I can be hers, if she is to be thirty miles off, and I am to be here."

"Did ever anybody hear the like? What do you mean, Harry? Don't you know you are but children, and that she cannot be yours, nor you hers, till you are your own master?"

"I am my own master now," said Harry, with alarmingly fierce impatience.

"Now, my dear Harry," replied my mother, in a tone of the most soothing expostulation, "do listen to me with calmness, and make manifest that clearness and depth of understanding which everybody gives you credit for. This must be an affair of time: you and Sophia may be permitted to correspond, and to see each other now and then: but what in these matters is called a proposal, cannot be entertained till you are of age."

"Of age! why that is five years to come—as long a time—a time that seems to me as reaching from the Deluge—as long as since I had the fever."

"Fever!" cried my mother—"you never had a fever so bad as you have now, you headlong, foolish boy."

"Nay, but my dear Madam, hear me. Why need I be of age, when all the difference will be that I shall then be master of my capital, and I am not so now? Of course when I can command all I have, I shall not

spend much more of it than I do at present. I keep a horse now : I shouldn't care a bit about a horse if—"

"Stop your tongue, Harry, or you will make me as distracted as yourself. If you will not listen to me, I hope you will to Sophy, who, I am sure, will tell you that nothing can be more preposterous, nothing more completely out of all question, than what you have taken into your metaphysical noddle, if metaphysics can exist with fancies so irrational and absurd. I am sure you are already aware that *she* will not agree with you."

"No, not now, perhaps ; but she would in a few days, if we had—as of course we ought to have—free intercourse with one another."

"I must put a stop to this conversation, and I do so by saying, most decidedly, that Sophy returns this very morning to her aunt's. You will prepare to take leave of her in an hour's time."

So saying, my mother left the room, while Harry, struck motionless, and looking for a full minute on the door she had violently closed, broke out at last into another fit of convulsive but tearless sobs. He then threw himself on the carpet, till a servant crossed the room as if on a message ; on which he arose and asked her what it was. She told him it was to give orders for fetching a post-chaise. Harry turned away, and threw himself again upon the ground, where he was still lying, when Sophy and her mother came into the room, both of them dressed for the journey, the chaise being at the door, and one of the men servants in readiness to attend them. It is impossible to describe the scene that followed. Had Sophy been

going to the scaffold, the lovers could not have parted in greater agony. Not that there would have been any on Sophy's side, but she could not see Harry's distress without sharing it. My mother's firmness stopped the scene, or there is no knowing where it would have ended. Harry watched the chaise out of sight, and when he had strained his eyes till he could no longer imagine he saw it, he ran over to his bedroom and locked himself in, refusing to come out either to dinner or supper. My mother returned late in the evening, and hoped to soothe him by sending word she had a kind message from Sophia: he replied that he was too much disturbed to make his appearance, but begged she would write down the message, and send it to him. She did so, and in this manner ended an important day.

Next morning, sheer hunger brought Harry to breakfast, and, in due time, to the dinner-table, but the rest of the day was spent in "moping." It was holiday time; so that he was not obliged to read unless he liked. The next day, he appeared to revive a little,—the effect of a letter received by post from Sophia; and we began to hope the violence of the fever was over. But we were deceived. On the following morning we missed him at breakfast, and he was sought for in vain in his bedroom and elsewhere. On looking into the stable, his horse was likewise missed. My father immediately guessed in what direction both of them were gone; and finishing his breakfast hastily, he mounted and rode with all speed in the expected direction, which was of course to my aunt's.

Of this lady, so near a relation to us, it will be necessary to say something before I proceed. She was the eldest of four sisters, of whom the second and third had been long deceased, and the youngest, my mother, was her junior by a great many years. Enjoying the larger part of what had fallen to four daughters, and having always been single, she was able to live in good style, kept several servants, and a one-horse carriage. To Sophia she was most tenderly attached ; but so far as she comprehended the policy at home with regard to Harold, she held back from it, rather than lent it assistance. She was surprised, though delighted, when my mother returned suddenly with Sophia ; the real intention having been to keep her at home, and arrangements having been made at both houses with that understanding. My aunt had invited another young person to make a stay with her, as a relief from the solitude she felt on Sophia's departure ; and as this young person had been an early playmate of Sophy's, my sister was delighted on her return to find a companion. Such was the family that was about to have its quiet invaded, on the morning when Harold rode off before breakfast from school, and my father followed in pursuit.

Though my father rode the swifter horse, yet Harold having had the start, arrived twenty minutes before him. At the time of his arrival, my aunt, in her bonnet and shawl, was engaged in the fore-court of the house, giving instructions to her gardener concerning the arrangement of some evergreens. The two girls were occupied within doors, and, of course,

out of sight. The moment my aunt saw and recognised him, she exclaimed with some alarm, though she half guessed the true circumstances of the case,

“Good Heavens, Mr. Harold ! why what’s the matter ? Is all well at home ?”

“All quite well,” said Harry, having taken off his hat, and still keeping it in his hand.

“Then,” said my aunt, after a short meditative pause, “then, sir,

‘ Say, why bareheaded you are come,
Or why you come at all.’

“But put on your hat, put on your hat : I see that you are very, very much warmer than you ought to be, young man, and the weather is cold :—you may take a chill.”

“Yes, Madam,” said Harry :—“if you will allow your servant to take my horse, and permit me to pass into the house—”

“No, no, Mr. Harold ! two words to that : I am governor here, and on guard against a surprise. However, you shall not catch a cold, if we can help it. Thomas, go into the chaise-house, bring the rug, and throw it over this gentleman’s shoulders ! it is likely that our parley here may be long.”

“But may I hope, Madam, you will grant me a little refreshment. I have stopped only once to bait my horse, since I set out.”

“Oh, certainly ! but it cannot be here. Give your horse to the man, walk two or three steps to a cottage you will find on your right, where the good woman, if you say you come from me, will furnish you with

a chair and table by her fire-side ; and in ten minutes you shall have the best refreshments my house can afford."

"Allow me to decline your kindness. The fact is, I wish to speak with Miss Sophia."

"I know you do ; and I wish to prevent it, if I can ; being sure of this, that your meeting will but distress her. What can you have to say to her that is of importance to her happiness at the present moment?"

"Perhaps you do not know that we are pledged to one another : and I have discovered, since she came hither, that the arrangements were previously made for her staying at home, and that these have been changed only for the cruel purpose of keeping us apart."

"And pray, Mr. Philosopher, by what course of study have you made this discovery?"

"Through Charles Highmore. By the by, I learn, from Sophia's letter, that Miss Highmore is staying with you."

"Yes she is,—the darling children ! they are as happy as two innocent hearts can make them : it is all sunshine at present ; and here you come with your thunder and lightning to disturb them. I can safely say Sophy's letter did not invite you hither."

"Oh no ! she will be as much surprised at my coming as you are. But Charles Highmore called yesterday to give her an appointed lesson in drawing, being the second or third of a long course engaged for. Then, for the first time, I learned that the separation was a purposed cruelty, and not an event which pre-

vious arrangements made necessary.—My dear Madam, I must speak to Sophia on the subject.”

“My dear Sir, you must and shall do no such thing. I am told that you are deeply read in metaphysics; yet it appears to my simple judgement that you have left plain common-sense behind you. Possibly you may not be the only one that has made the same advance at the same expense. Do you not see, young man, that my sister is by no means adverse to your suit?—for my part, to speak plainly to you, I am sorry she is not: but I will not put myself between you and Sophia, provided you give some proofs of a temper to make her happy. Nothing that I have so far seen of you or heard of you, appears to furnish any good ground to hope for this; but you are young,—very young,—and may grow wiser. Give a present proof of your dawning wisdom, by accepting my offer of refreshment, and a bed at night that shall be provided for you; and return, to-morrow, to your home and your duties. Depend upon it, you come not into my house—you don’t lodge here, Mr. Harold.”

Unfortunately, at this moment, Sophia, with her friend at her shoulder, appeared at a window that overlooked the forecourt. The recognition was a scream of pleasure on both sides.

My good aunt, vexed, but not forgetful of what youth is, and what she herself had been, exclaimed half aloud—

“Ay, now we shall have the garden scene, and I, of course, must act the part of the nurse, only I am on the wrong side of the window.”

Just however as the scene was beginning, my father

appeared, and his presence quite altered the tableau. He was very tired, and his anger with Harry so much the greater. It was therefore in no measured terms that he first addressed him ; but the fit soon gave way, and he then requested my aunt to admit them both into the house, and their horses to be led to the stable. "By all means," said she. "My responsibility being removed by the superior in command, it is no disgrace to yield." The door was therefore opened, and the lovers were of course instantly in each other's arms. In five minutes more, the travellers, and the three inmates, were seated at a substantial lunch ; which being ended, my father again took Harry to task ; informing him that immediately after breakfast on the following morning, he should require his company back, and that he expected, at the moment, a promise from him never to repeat the trick that he had played that day. "For," continued my father, "unless I have this assurance from you, my proceeding will be this :—I shall remove Sophia from her aunt's, and place her where her domicile cannot be discovered, interdicting all correspondence by letter, and of course preventing the possibility of interview. On the other hand, if you will give me the assurance I require, you shall correspond as often as you like, and I will promise, every two or three months to ride over with you to see Sophia, if my sister will allow it, and will give us a night's lodging."

My aunt made a most ready assent. "And further," said my father, "when Christmas again comes round, it is possible we may not think it unfit to have Sophy home for a few days."

My father well knew that a promise from Harry would be sacred. But Harry, to whom three months and Christmas sounded like eternity, looked upon the ground, and made no answer. Poor Sophy, alarmed at my father's determined tone, endeavoured to catch Harry's eye ; and when she found this was not possible, she ventured to approach him, and, drawing him from the table, she whispered a most earnest entreaty in his ear, that he would not expose her to the threatened alternative. Thus urged, he gave the required assurance ; and matters seemed to be settled for the present, when my aunt spoke :

" Now," said she, " comes my turn to be called to account. I have been guilty of a great breach of propriety, though I assure you all it was unintentional, and yet, however unintended, I must say I am not sorry for it. Yesterday, a post-letter arrived in this envelope. You will see how easily a hasty glance might mistake its destination. There is ' Miss Drake' almost in a corner, blotted, and nearly illegible, and ' Miss Bloxam' as plain as letters can make the name. By the by, Mr. Harold, when you next write my name, put *Mrs.* before it,—I have long dropped the *Miss*. Well, I broke the seal, and heavens ! what a flood, or rather what a fire of miseries made its escape ! Knowing, however, that none of my correspondents could be dying simply on account of my personal absence, I glanced at the subscription, and was about to return the enclosure to its case, when something more caught my eye. I took the liberty, in consequence, to read the whole letter, and determined at once that Sophy should not have it. Let me ask you,

young man, why you should try to make *her* miserable, because *you* are so. There must be something very different between her love and yours, since they are attended with such different effects. Night and day, *your* love, so it appears, is a torment—*hers* is a happiness, as I can vouch. And, dear girl! *she* never has bad dreams at night, for she never has bad thoughts in the day. Pray, brother, as you are to allow unreserved correspondence between these young people, do you see no objection to letters such as this addressed to your young, unsuspecting, innocent daughter?"

So saying, she put the letter into my father's hands, who, reading it silently, found, as I learned from Harry, passages to the following effect:—

"Dear, dear Sophia, I am quite miserable, now you are taken from us. I go to every spot and corner where you have been—I sit down in the chair you have occupied. I try to imagine you present; but as imagination is not reality, I come to myself only to feel inconsolable despair. I am just as miserable during the time appointed for sleep; I cannot find sleep, unless a fevered confusion of thought may bear that name. I follow you, in my dreams, to precipices, whence you fall from my sudden embrace, or I from yours; and then I start afresh to seek you in wildernesses. If at last I catch you, and my dream brings raptures that I must not tell, it is only to wake, and find that I did but dream, and that you are miles away from my ardent bosom."

My father frowned as he read the letter, but he said nothing: he knew he should have full opportunity to talk to Harry on their ride the next morn-

ing. All he did, was, to crumple up the letter when he had finished reading it, and throw it behind the fire. My aunt watched it for a moment, and then exclaimed, "Well, I declare it burns like other paper! I trembled for my flue when I saw so much ardent matter about to be added to a blazing fire. But come, as there is an end of that, let us make an end of all other subjects that can trouble our happiness for the rest of the day. You are too tired for any out-door enjoyment; we must try to amuse you within. My two darlings there, whose very souls are music, can supply us with a taste of it from their tongues' and fingers' ends. The harp and the piano are ready for them up-stairs, and I have sent to our parish clerk to borrow the violoncello which leads our exquisite Sunday choir. Come, Mr. Harold, give me your arm. I don't intend to put you in Macheath's predicament between those young ladies—brother Drake can bring up the two ducks—the darling ducks."

Thus speaking she led the way into the drawing-room, and her cheerfulness, which was genuine, and not assumed for the occasion, soon had a complete effect on all the others—on Harry not the least, who, in spite of all she had done and said in opposition to him, had too much good sense not to know she was in the right, and too much good feeling not to respect her the more for it. I wish I could delineate my aunt—if I could, I should have to trace a lady verging on seventy, of middle stature—something inclined to stoutness, with eyes beaming benevolence, and features that made you say, "How beautiful she must

once have been !” Her dress was of quaker-like simplicity ; and her gray hair, parted smoothly over her ample forehead, issued from under a cap of snowy whiteness. It is wonderful how she contrived to win Harry’s attention, and withdraw him from being constantly at Sophia’s elbow. This she did by making him an observer, along with herself, of the innocent gayety of the two girls, and telling him, at the same time, little traits of Sophia’s conduct and character. “ Oh !” said Harry, as a part of conversations and confessions which I have hereafter to report, “ oh ! if the attractions and influences of that blessed day could have been frequently repeated, I should have been saved from all that has happened—saved in soul both for this life and the next !”

In short, my aunt made Harry sensible that a woman’s conversation, as such, may have an indescribable charm, where there is no grosser perception of sex than is supplied by the unsexual soul :—it is the charm of a mother’s conversation,—of a sister’s,—and of one who is neither mother nor sister, when she can display such qualities of heart and understanding as graced my aunt, and she throws aside, either of necessity or of choice, all pretence to charm by other means. My aunt, in order to engage Harry the more, opened a little of her own history : she had had her days of giddiness, she said, and passed her teens with all the sweet fulness of hope which love inspires : her hope was blighted, not in any usual way, by death, or desertion, or wilful alienation, but because the heart she had rested on was unsound at its core :—“ I discovered this in time,” said she, “ in spite of the

affection which had blinded me, and I had just resolution enough to break the tie before it was knotted for life. Of that resolution I never repented; but my love had been fixed, and I never loved again. Old woman as I now am, I should have felt it unseemly to make you my confidant in such matters—boy, as I must call you,—did I not see much between you and Sophy that reminds me of my own case. You must excuse me for saying so,—and you *may* do so, because the consequences are yet to come,—and you, and only you next to Heaven, can prevent them. Look at that dear girl,—you have no idea—yes, I say it emphatically—you have no idea with what *purity* of heart she loves you. My sister has so contrived that it should grow with her growth and strengthen with her strength. For my own part, I repeat, I am sorry for it; for indeed, Harry, I doubt you—not your honour, not your integrity, not your sincerity, but—well, never mind, I hope I shall prove a vile prognosticator. But I must confess I have expressed these fears to Sophy after I got hold of the letter yesterday, and I will tell you what she said—it was only last night—Harriet had just gone to bed, and Sophy was about to follow her: ‘My dear aunt,’ she began, after a very long pause, ‘I cannot entertain any of the fears concerning Harry, which have so unaccountably possessed you. Hav’n’t we known each other from our infancy? and for my part, I loved him without knowing that I did, and I should have continued to love even without a return; yes, I should indeed, and so exclusively, that I am sure I could never have listened to any one else as a lover. In that case, dear aunt,

I should have been on the way to become, like you, a patient demure old maid'—(yes, so the saucy hussy called me,) 'ay!' continued she, 'a very contented old maid; for, of course, I could not have complained, and I would have forced myself to be content. Well, now suppose (of course I may suppose all sorts of impossible things, as you do)—suppose that Harry should, in some way, prove wanting to my hopes, my single state would be better rather than worse; for I should have a less high opinion of him; which would serve to wean me, if I could be weaned, from the affection I bear him; while, as to myself, unless something unworthy in me were to be the cause of his supposed deficiency, I should be on as good terms with my sweet self as ever.' And away she ran to bed, laughing at me in defiance."

These near subjects were not the only ones by which my aunt contrived to win Harry's attention on that memorable day, during the intervals between the music, and while the girls and my father were otherwise engaged. She was a very well-read woman, and aware that Harry had an acquaintance with literature, and a taste for its best parts, such as very few of his years are able to display, she drew him out in quotation and critical opinion, but always with a cleverly managed aim. That aim will be understood when I mention that the character of woman as delineated by different poets, and contrasted with that of man, came, among other points, under consideration. Harry happened to say that Pope has painted the characters of women in very true and lively colours. "The wretch!" cried my aunt, "there is

one distich of his, so vilely libellous, so entirely the reverse of truth, that he ought to have been hanged in chains alive, or at least in a bag, and made a public pincushion, for every woman to take her share in punishing him."

"What distich do you mean?" said Harry.

"Well, it is so dirty that I do not like to repeat it—

‘Men, some to business, some to pleasure, take,
But’——

You know the rest,—the greatest lie ever spoken."

"Yes," said Harry,

‘——every woman is at heart a rake.’

Yes, I admit that as a general rule, it has very many exceptions."

"Why," said my aunt, "it is itself the exception: the rule is the reverse. Men predisposed to be profligates, go forth into the world, and, meeting only with women like themselves, because all others shrink from the atmosphere which they create, conclude that all women are in heart the same, wanting but occasions to be as bad in practice as the pitiable minority with which they are familiar. Pope was the remainder of a corrupt school that dates its beginning from the licentious days of Charles the Second. Go back to the poets of the Elizabethan era, and very different testimony is borne to the purity of woman's heart and woman's love, contrasted with the propensities of man."

"The fact, if it is one," said Harold, "never struck me. Of course, the allegorical poets, Sidney, Spenser, and others, when they paint fairy princesses, nymphs,

and shepherdesses, make them spotless. But the poet of nature, the great poet of all, tells the truth, and gives us some very profligate women."

"Of course he does, or he would not be the poet of nature. But now I have you, Mr. Harold. The question is, not whether there exist profligate women, but whether the profligacy which reigns in the world springs most from man, or most from woman. I am quite willing that the Shakspearian world, which you acknowledge to be the reflection of nature—a reflection with poetic hues of course—I am quite willing that *his* world shall decide the question. Go to that corner, and bring hither the volumes containing Shakspeare's plays, which you will find there. Now turn to them in order, and make your report of the female characters. First there is Miranda—the pure staple material—woman as she is in herself while the world is unknown to her—can innocence itself be more lovely? less free from all natural propensity to err? But go on—whom have we next?"

"We come next to Julia and Silvia, and their two gentlemen of Verona."

"Ay, and who are the delinquents, pray, the gentlemen or the ladies? However, I won't stop you at the particulars: I have to prove the existence of a general law, and I think you logicians say that this can be done only by a wide induction. Very well; you shall have it. Who are next?"

"The Merry Wives of Windsor:—a little coarse, those merry dames."

"And suppose they are, it is an exterior coarseness only; all is pure within: the debauchee has their supreme contempt, and if they show that contempt in

laughter, they are not the less in earnest. They are wives of good old English stock, that lived at a time when words and acts were plainer than in our well-bred days. I will not allow the least drawback in your favour from any part of what they say or do.—Go on.”

“Well, I am afraid I must give in: you have a host in your next evidence; she is one that leaves Diana herself—the *pagan* Diana—at an immeasurable distance. But do you think she is anything more than a fiction? I know there are Angelos—but do you believe there are Isabellas?”

“If I were a knight, and my old horse would bear a saddle, I would call you to account for the villany of the query.”

“O, my dear Madam, there requires no better defender of your sex, than yourself as one of them. And I come next to a lively lady who is eminent in your own line:—her wit is too much for the bachelor, and her heart almost too big for its case when the honour of her cousin is slandered.”

“Yes, yes,—both the cousins are capital evidence to my purpose. I claim them as mine, both Beatrice and Hero.”

“Then I calculate you will claim some other pairs of female characters that I see before me—for instance, Helena and Hermia, in the Dream; Olivia and Viola, in Twelfth Night; Helena and Diana, in All’s Well.”

“Assuredly. They sometimes speak, I acknowledge, as innocent young ladies could not now speak, and act as they could not act: but if they come not

up to the standard of our conventional *manners*, they are perhaps so much the more strongly fortified in *morals* that change not with time. And this at least is observable, which is all that my purpose requires, that their affections,—however diverse their characters in other respects,—move them to the selection of one single object, and preserve them constant to that one. But go on. I see you have passed by Portia: I cannot part with her any more than with the historical Portia of the Roman plays: but I will give you up Jessica. I like even her father better than I do her. I attribute Shylock's savage qualities entirely to the so-called Christians who persecuted him. To have borne with patience the contumelies they heaped upon him, we must require him to be a Jew with a Christian spirit, such as they, his Christian persecutors, do not display. No wonder that any original kindliness of heart in him was soured, or frozen up. But though he hates the Christians, he loves his tribe, and he loves his daughter, and loves the memory of her mother Leah. What could that daughter be, who leaves her father in his desert home, and steals his money, and throws herself into the arms of one who is the enemy of her father and her people? She who is a traitress to her first hearth, is not likely to be true to her second. We know nothing of her, I allow, that makes her, in the principal point, an exception to my illustrious list; but then we know of her only up to her honeymoon. Away with her!"

"Then perhaps you will give me Desdemona also."

"Oh! no, no, no! Black and white are not more

distinct than Jessica and Desdemona. Desdemona, though a soft and yielding, is a high-principled woman. There is nothing impure in her affection,

‘She sees Othello’s visage in his mind.’

And if there had been a chance of leading her father to see as she did, I will answer for her, she would not have left him secretly. Having done so, she clearly exculpates herself by the plea she makes in her father’s presence, before the assembled senate. She must stand one of the foremost in my list :—but go on ! there is a crowd yet to join her : the faithful Imogen, the filial Cordelia, the fervent Juliet—by the by, never forget the fact that Romeo is her first and only love, while she is his second ; and it is fair to calculate, from the ease with which he transfers his first and equally violent passion, that a third, and a fourth, and a fifth, would have succeeded to fill up the tempestuous passage from youth to age.”

“ You give a pretty picture of us.”

“ I have studied more than one of you, young man. The first subject of my study was of too near interest to myself, not to be most anxiously, most thoroughly scanned and probed. I have since followed the study only from habit, as one among other occupations for my thoughts. But I shall grow too serious if I talk thus : let me go back to my list : I had mentioned Imogen, Cordelia, Juliet, and I was going to add Ophelia.”

“ Hers,” said Harry, “ is a short and melancholy history ; but as regards her own endurance, there is little distinctly told.”

“ And therefore,” replied my aunt, “ more to be

imagined if we ponder on the circumstances. Here is an amiable young creature, of well-trained understanding, as we gather from her obedience to her brother's and father's wholesome advice ; and yet of strong affections, as evinced by the shock she receives from her father's violent death. What a misfortune that one so affectionate, so prudent, so fitted to be the mate of another like herself, should have been sought after by that mysterious, that melancholy, and withal, that accomplished, high-souled being that came across her humbler path ! Hamlet treats her with cruelty—nay, with indelicacy ; but he cannot help it ; he has involved her destinies in his, and we weep for both of them, as tragedy means us to weep. And so much for this beautiful work of our great bard : with every play, my proofs increase in number.

“ Ay, Madam, but you have forgot the queen-mother, Gertrude : I suppose you do not mean to claim her.”

“ Oh no ;—she is an exception ; she belongs to you. But I can outweigh her by two queens, each of whom would singly turn the scale. One of them is Katharine, the consort of that abominable Blue-beard, Harry the Eighth ; the other, the wronged Hermione, with the host of high-spirited women of Leontes' court. And while we are upon queens, we must not forget to mention one who gained her place by murder ; but it was to seat her husband on a throne. Lady Macbeth is neutral as regards our question. Fierce and bloody woman as she is, she belongs not to my list of virtuous females, but neither can she be brought against my general assertion.”

“ I suppose on the same principle, though with nothing of heinous weight against her, Katharina the Shrew is of neutral value.”

“ No indeed : I am not at all ashamed of her ; there is not a speck in her character except what her tongue makes : and she has sense enough to be cured of her only defect under the discipline of a man of spirit. Well, Sir, I will not press my proofs further upon you. I might find a host still in the historical plays ; for instance, Lady Constance and Lady Percy in the English Chronicles ; Volumnia and Virgilia in the Roman ; whom I could back by the many secondary female persons of the ever-shifting scene : but now for your exceptions.”

“ First, then, Goneril and Regan.”

“ The wretches ! They make good my position that women who fail to their parents, will fail to their husbands. If you found many such creatures in Shakspeare’s world, I should have nothing to say. I admit them as exceptions, but as nothing more.”

“ What say you of Cressida ?”

“ Ay, there you have the most pertinent exception you will be able to find, and you have very little remaining ground to search in. Cressida, I acknowledge, is the type of a great many women ; but they form a variety only, not the class : she fails in the characteristic of the class. She is one of yourselves, and meets you on fair, equal terms. She does you no injustice. You come together like other animals, and go your way again, each free to choose another mate. She, no more than you, is disposed to that refining, holy, constant love, which leads the soul upward from

earth to heaven. For my part, I believe that as woman was man's first seducer, so her mission now is, to repair the wrong, and restore him to innocence and heaven. She is, for this end, gifted with stronger religious feeling, and with a constancy of heart that, once fixed, cannot be turned from its object. I am speaking of woman as she is by nature and by grace : but the best nature may be corrupted, and grace may be withdrawn. Such, however, is not Cressida's nature, nor do I call her corrupt, but simply a worldling. *She* has no sense of woman's high mission, but meets you, as I said, on equal terms, and leaves you as she found you. In a worldly point of view, she inflicts no wrong except when the man she happens to meet with is an exception to *his* class, as she is an exception to her own ; and Troilus is an exception."

"And do you not think, dear Madam, that the variety among us which *he* represents, is very extensive."

"Well, I will be as little censorious as I can, notwithstanding an old maid's privilege, and will acknowledge that it may be extensive, and, in proportion as woman's mission prospers, it will increase. I pray that it may at last absorb the class ; for this is what I mean when I say 'thy kingdom come.'"

My aunt's tone had become rather serious, and Harry was induced by it to throw himself back in his chair, and to meditate for a few moments before he replied. Nothing could be more consonant, by its generalization, to his own habitual manner of speculating ; but the direction of view which my aunt opened, was quite new to him. At length he said :

"I think I understand you, dear Madam. I will

explain how I understand you, that you may correct me if I am wrong. You say that man, the *male* man, is by nature prone only to transient attachments as regards the other half of his species; but that woman, by nature, assisted by further help from above, is so endowed that even through the force of the low instinct which attracts him, she has power to raise him from this low animal condition, to a state that prepares him for denizenship in heaven; that nevertheless there are exceptions on both sides; for that many women are naturally as light in their affections as men, and many men are naturally prone to be as constant to the object of their choice as women."

"Thank you, Mr. Philosopher," said my aunt; "and may your practice be squared to the theory you have so clearly expressed!"

"May I venture to ask you a special question?" said Harry doubtfully.

"No; you had better not;" said my aunt: "at least if it refers to yourself. All I have to say, with reference to the question that I think you mean to ask me, is, that an angel is appointed for you, if, to yourself, you are not wanting."

"Well, then, my dear Madam, let me put a question, which I clearly perceive you will not think has reference to myself. Do you know any one of my sex in our circle of acquaintance, of whom you can augur that when he loves, he will love once and for ever?"

My aunt paused, not as if she could not, but as if she wished not to answer. At length she said,—

"Yes, I know one with whom we are all familiar;

but at present he is so young that my judgement may be premature."

"You don't mean Frank?"

"Frank! Frank is but a child. By the by, Mr. Harold; how is that you have started into manhood, and left him, at the same age, so far behind? Here am I, an old woman on the verge of seventy, talking to you as to my equal in experience—you, who have counted only sixteen; and on matters, too, that we keep from children. There is indeed this similarity between us, that you, by reason of your youth and your seclusion, and I, by reason of my maiden condition, argue not from self-collected, but from book-knowledge. Still, the fact is so strange now I happen to think of it, that I cannot help expressing my wonder. As I look at you, now, if I did not know your age, I declare I should take you for two and twenty at least; and as I listen to you, I should take you for fifty."

"'With all my imperfections on my head,' which fifty years are apt to bring upon other male folk."

"No, not so; quite the contrary. I do not wish to flatter you, young man, when I declare my opinion to be, that you have right knowledge, and right feeling, and right judgement in ample sufficiency to keep you from all the imperfections which fifty years might accumulate, save those that are inseparable from our human condition."

"But as to this Troilus among our acquaintance—who may it be? I am curious to know."

"Well, never mind. If there exist such a person, let us wish he may not stumble on a Cressida: though,"

continued my aunt, musingly, "there is no danger of that ; I am afraid he is doomed to another ill which is as great—to sigh where no response awaits him." Then raising her voice, and her looks, which during these few words had been depressed, she said to Harry, "You, Sir, are the conqueror of hearts, and I am afraid that more than one will be made to feel your powers."

"Now, my dear Madam, you certainly *are* flattering me. But if, having such power, I should dare to exercise it on more than one, then should *I* deserve to meet with a Cressida."

"Oh ! my young friend, a Cressida would do *you* no harm : you would be quite a match for her, ay, or for queen Cleopatra herself ; though if you should meet with a Cleopatra, I know who would be the Octavia. By the by, how is it we have hitherto overlooked these two conspicuous women in the Shakspearian world, seeing that they are historical as well as poetical personages, and that the one is so remarkable an instance to the point on my side,—the other, so magnificent a sample on yours ?"

"And do you think that a Cleopatra would have no power to deprave me ?"

"Deprave you ! why I am supposing there would be nothing in you for such a woman to make worse. While on full swing through the world, you may overtake a more dangerous ensnarer than she. It cannot be denied that Cleopatra has splendid gifts for this world's good, and Dryden, who adapted himself to the worldly comprehension of his licentious day, speaks her worth in the title of the play which he

devotes to her :—you remember, that title is, ‘ All for Love, or the World well Lost,’—namely, the world of ambition and empire ; and the poet’s verdict, if we assume no other ground for it than worldly morals, must I think be admitted to be philosophically just. There may, I repeat, be worse women than Cleopatra lying in wait for a man such as you are in danger of becoming.”

“ Then it must be old Scratch himself in the guise of a woman.”

“ Even so. I hold that as there may be women who have a mission from the powers of light to draw men upward to the skies, so there may be others empowered by the demons of darkness to draw them to perdition. Imagine a woman with all the attractions of Cleopatra,—her beauty, her voluptuousness, her accomplishments, and all her outward virtues, but with the heart, the fiendishness of an Iago—would not such a woman be dangerous ?”

“ Certainly ; but I ask in reply, is such a woman possible ?”

“ All evil is possible for which we ourselves make a path. But our conversation becomes much too serious. I think we have exhausted the stock of examples from the females of Shakspeare’s world. Do you remember any further exceptions to oppose to my gallery of worthies ?”

“ Not unless I take you to a place whither a lady ought not to go, and introduce you to Dame Quickly and Doll Tearsheet.”

“ Nor is it a place less fit for me than it ought to be considered for you, young man. Remember, Sir, you are

a sworn knight, and cannot have to do with such cattle without violation of your understood pledges. Yet let me not speak of the poor creatures with contempt: none are more deserving of pity: I must not forget that He who came to save *them* and *all*, deigned to show himself, after the great sacrifice, first and specially to Mary Magdalene. My heart bleeds to think—if there is any truth in my view of woman's call and natural qualifications,—my heart bleeds when I reflect on the multitudes that man's vices—the *male* man as you call him—have shut out from all that is decent and holy in life! how many sisterly, wifely, motherly hearts, are buried in the filth which society treads under foot, in order, as it should seem, that the remainder of the sex may be reserved for what man deems his hours of virtue! But again I am becoming too grave. It is time that you and I should join the others:—*You and I*,” and she paused on thus repeating her own words, the recollection of the difference of ages again crossing her mind. Harry perfectly read her thought, and added gayly,

“Yes, dear madam, let us go and join the *other* young people.”

Saying which, he rose and advanced to her with so much alacrity, that the old lady half drew back.

“Heaven defend me!” cried she; “why, Sophy, my dear, you had better come and look about you a little, or you may chance to find your lover too attentive to your old aunt.”

“You had better pray, with all your might, that such an issue may be,” said he to Sophy, “in order to save me and you from infinitely worse. Do

you know, Sophy, I have had such a pretty schooling !”

“ Don’t prate of school affairs out of school hours,” cried my aunt, gently boxing his ear, as he sat down between Sophia and her father. “ Now, talk to one another a moment or two, while I go and see what has drawn Harriet into a corner by herself.”

Crossing to Harriet, she found her reading a letter which she had just received from her brother. My aunt made the usual inquiries concerning him ; to which Harriet replied :

“ Why he seems in a very melancholy humour : he says he has just received some money to which he made no claim, and that it brought with it a great disappointment.”

“ How so ?”

“ It appears that Mrs. Drake had engaged him to give a long course of lessons to Sophy. He went yesterday in full expectation of finding her ready for her third lesson, and the bird, as I need not tell you, had flown. Mrs. Drake told him that Sophy’s absence was unavoidable, but that he should be no loser, and insisted on paying him for the whole course. Charles says he would rather a hundred times have had the pupil without the money, (though you know how poor we are,) than the money without the pupil : and seems so unaccountably out of spirits, that he has made me feel dull also.”

“ Poor Charles !” said my aunt softly. “ Don’t forget, dear Harriet, when you answer his letter, to say to him, from me, that I cannot help viewing it as a most fortunate disappointment, and that in saying

so, he is to believe me more of a witch than I appear. But come :—throw off your dulness, and let us have a little more music.”

I must here interpose a brief notice of the two young persons to whom the foregoing passages refer. Charles and Harriet Highmore, the former my elder by about eighteen months, the other about two months younger than my sister, and consequently near upon two years younger than myself, were the orphan children of one who had been the leading solicitor and the town clerk of our neighbouring country town. He ventured largely in railroad speculation, ruined himself, and soon fell sick from the effects of a disorder, previously slight, but which his grief made mortal. Charles, up to this time, namely his fourteenth year, had been, by favour, a pupil in our school ; I say by favour, because he was the only one admitted from the neighbourhood among the sons of our East and West Indian friends. During the same time, Harriet, by being a frequent visitor in my mother's nursery, grew up, as I lately said, quite a companion to Sophy ; and thus stood affairs when their father died. Though he left hardly any property, he had made a very large circle of friends ; and steps were soon taken to do what could be done for the children. A cottage was bought for them in the suburb of the town, their old housekeeper put in possession, and they were encouraged and assisted to improve their respective talents, with the view of turning them to profit as the means of livelihood. Harriet gave every promise of excellence in music, and Charles, who, while at school, had excelled at the

pencil, was soon able, notwithstanding his youth, to command employment in taking likenesses, and in teaching drawing. Wherever he went, and he went long distances at times, he was sure to give satisfaction, as much by his amiable manners, as by his tact in the first-mentioned department of his profession. He had been in my aunt's neighbourhood, who invited him to fill up such time as he could spare, by giving instructions in drawing to Sophia; which instruction had been carried on at intervals in the summer and autumn of the year now before us, namely the year which, as this chapter has narrated, brought Sophia home at Christmas.—Such is the sum of what I find necessary to be said concerning these two young persons at present; and it is perhaps almost all that I may choose to say: for I wish to avoid, in this published memoir, whatever reference I can to living persons who are most intimately dear to me.

The day present to us, which threatened so seriously to disturb my aunt's quiet household when it brought Harry to it, but which, on my father's arrival, brightened, as we have seen, into a day of great rational enjoyment, happened to be the last of the year. The persons assembled, amused themselves till they saw it out; and I believe I can say that each, on retiring to rest, found happy slumber. As my father was firm to his purpose, the breakfast, on the following morning, was not quite so bright:—Harry and Sophy looked at each other, and sighed. Yet when the moment of parting came, there was no repetition of that tragedy scene, which was acted on the previous Monday.

Sophy dropped a few silent tears, and Harry uttered his adieu with emotion, but not with violence. In taking leave of my aunt, he made her fully sensible of the admiration and respect she had inspired. And thus the new year began, if not with sunshine, yet with a soft promise that sunshine would come in due season. It is indeed for man to hope the best; but it belongs to Providence to determine when the sunshine shall come, and when, for a longer or a shorter time, the clouds shall impend over this abode of ours.

The effect which the intercourse of the previous day produced on Harry was most extraordinary. It must be borne in mind that while I state this effect, and others of a like kind, I am not giving the fruit of my own observation, or that of other persons near him, but recording revelations which he subsequently made of himself. On this authority I aver, then, that Harry was really in love with my aunt. What was there extraordinary in that? will be the exclamation of every one; for as it was her discourse which kindled his admiration, it was of no moment to the effect produced that she was an old *woman*; the same effect would have been produced had she been a *man*. No such thing. Against a *man* who should have dared to look into his soul and probe its secrets, all that soul would have been up in arms: the natural pugnacity of his sex would have been stirred up, and impatience, opposition, and defiance, would have followed, not love. To my aunt's glance and touch, his soul willingly unfolded itself: for though of an old woman, he still felt that it was a woman's glance and a woman's touch. Much must also be attributed to

the indescribable charm of tones that found an echo in two upright hearts; of tones that spoke of love, although of love gone by. There is no doubt that the old lady, while engaged with Harry, was carried back to the times, when, with alternate hope and fear, she was trying the soundness of the heart on which her own rested; there is no doubt she made the reflection that if that heart had been surrounded by the honour, the candour, the probity, which she witnessed in Harry, it might have been preserved, as she saw that Harry's could be, from the corruption that followed. No one can deny, for every one capable of high-toned feeling must have experienced, that, at certain times and moments, there is an intercommunication of soul with soul which leaves all other language but its own far, far behind. All this was felt, notwithstanding their difference of age, by my young friend and my aged aunt; and I call this, love: but how pure was this *love*! how distinct, necessarily distinct, from the animal passion to which the name is so often given! There was however nothing extraordinary in this Platonic affection, nothing that in itself needs have been prejudicial to the affection which youth and beauty had engendered toward my sister: on the contrary, it might have been expected that the one would have chastened, as it certainly did for a time moderate, the flames of the other. But it was the peculiarity of Harry's temperament, that the several elements which formed it, could not, or would not, be brought into fusion. Whether it was an original defect in him, or whether it had been superinduced by his habit of theorizing on the separate elements of our human

nature, or whether, as is most likely, his idiosyncrasy, intensified by Mr. Gordon's premature tuition, had engendered the habit, since which time, the force of both was daily increased by their operation on each other; the fact itself, however difficult to account for, was but too certain. And this was the effect which, at the present juncture, followed,—that the Platonic love left the other love to take more distinctly than ever an un-Platonic character. Poor Sophy! none of this effect was attributable to her. Young and beautiful she could not help being; but in all that reflected her innermost thoughts, and spoke her soul outwardly, there was nothing, on her part, to warrant in others a single unholy imagination. The wrong towards her would however have been in time repaired, if Sophy, in disposition, penetration, and spirit, had been what my aunt was at Sophy's time of life. She would have understood the character of Harry's passion; she would have spurned it as an insult to herself, and a degradation to him: in short, she would have made him feel that to win *her* soul, he must raise his own to a level with it. And with Harry she would have succeeded; though my aunt failed with her lover. For however powerful upon Harry were the attractions of physical beauty, his love of moral beauty, his appreciation of the virtues which are built upon self-resistance, was still more intense, when the better part of his nature was once aroused. But that which in Sophy was required to produce this effect,—the knowledge, the penetration, and the indignant spirit,—was as far from Sophia's inheritance, as the power to scorch from the soft light of the moon. Where she loved,

she was all confidence and trust ; and if she imagined anything in Harry's love that was not in her own, she imagined it was something better, not something worse. Even if she could have been made sensible of the contrary, if she could have known that Harry did not love her worthily, her indignation would have been drowned in her tears, and so have been powerless to the required effect. At the same time, she would not have been less sensible of the wrong, but the operation of that wrong would have been to break her heart, not to stir it up to resistance.

I believe I can best illustrate what I am now stating, by the copies of two letters which, among many others, have come into my possession, both of them being answers to letters received from Harry about this time, the one by Sophia, the other by my aunt. For it appears that when he had returned home, Harry never let many days pass without dispatching a letter to each of the objects of his attention whom he had left behind. What became of his letters, I know not : I think the old lady must have secured them all, and made a sacrifice of them, as she did of Harry's first letter to Sophia ; joining her own in the common destruction to evince her impartiality. The answers to two of his letters,—not the earliest of the series,—will however sufficiently indicate the character of those to which they reply ; and, beginning with Sophia's, they are as follow :

“ February 21st, 1842.

“ My dearest Harry,— What do you mean by your last ? I read it over and over on receiving it,

and was quite lost in conjecture. I put it down to wait for clearer brains, but when I had waited, and took it up again, I could not persuade myself you meant what you seemed to say. I have read it over fifty times since, and have tried to think myself mistaken. Not love you, Harry, as much as heart can love? Must I repeat, in order to be believed, what I have expressed over and over again in words, and, as far as I could, in every other way, that I love you with my whole soul—love you as my future husband, and so entirely, that none other can, or shall be my husband, let circumstances change as they may. You say that my love has not the strength of yours: it may be so;—you excel me in all things, and may be capable of a love that my feeble soul cannot reach:—I know not that—I only know that as much as I *can* love, I *do* love. When I was a little girl, I remember you used to bring a flower, or an apple, or a sugar-plum, and holding it for me with your hand lifted above your head, you laughed at me because I could not reach it. I am much in the same condition now that I was then; and I can no more help it now than I could then:—for instance, I cannot reach you in your studies. If I open one of the books of philosophy in which you take delight, I am bewildered in a moment. But why am I to be supposed incapable, on this account, of loving you? I love you in my own way, and that is, most truly, most sincerely. You say, if my love is nothing more than the child's love I felt for you four years ago, it is not the love you feel, or you seek. I am not skilful, as you are, Harry, in drawing distinctions; I can but

say my love has grown as I have grown, and that it occupies my whole heart. Shall I confess more? I sometimes allow very foolish suppositions to enter my mind:—I suppose your parents or friends to come among us, and, finding out our mutual inclination, at once consent to our union, so that we are to be married without the delay which now seems necessary. At such a supposition, my head, dear Harry, becomes giddy, and my heart is weak with its delight. But I know such thoughts are idle—perhaps worse than idle—and I restrain them. If I feel myself weak to restrain them, I pray for help, and the help is always granted. Was it necessary to tell you all this? Pray, dear Harry, write back immediately, and tell me clearly what you meant by your letter; but in the mean time rest assured of the unalterable affection of your

“SOPHIA.”

The following is a copy of my aunt's letter:

“February 24th, 1842.

“My dear Mr. Harold,—The next time you write to me, I beg that you will recollect that I am a very old woman, and you a very young man. I declare, on reading the first two or three lines of your last, I concluded you had made a mistake, by directing my letter to Sophy, and Sophy's to me; and was about to send to her room to get the letters exchanged, when on reading a little further, I found myself to be the veritable object of the incense offered. The letter in other respects was all very good from beginning to end, full of worthy sentiments, and clear

sensible distinctions—just such a letter as you ought to send to Sophia—such a letter as would make her happy, and, if followed up by others like it, would bring your minds into union. Now, I have a shrewd guess that your letter to her was not of this character; for it seemed to make her very uneasy. How is this? I hoped to call you my scholar, and to see some proof of advancement in the direction I wish to lead you; but I am afraid that not a single step is yet made in that direction. Is it true that you still persist in pressing on Sophy's mother your preposterous demand for an immediate marriage? How, in the name of common sense and common decorum, can you entertain such a wish? Suppose there was nothing in law that stood in your way, nothing in the recognised usages of society,—you are as unfit to be happy with Sophia beyond the honey-moon as you are to bring harmony from an instrument of which you know not the stops. Yes, believe me, 'there is much music, excellent voice in that little organ'—yet, 'you would not be able to make it speak.' And the course you are now taking to adapt her to yourself, is the very opposite to that which, for your *permanent* happiness, you are bound to take. For, if I am not mistaken, you are trying, in your letters, to raise in her the wildness of passion which you feel in yourself; while you neglect all the means by which your souls may be brought into consonance, and love and happiness secured when the wildness of passion shall have burned itself out. It is not in a month, or a year, or any number of years fewer than those which are placed between you, that this state of

mutual understanding, so indispensable to your happy marriage, can be brought about. I have said that Sophy is your appointed angel:—would you debase that angel to an earthly standard, instead of raising yourself to be capable of her ministry to you? I doubt whether her original appointment was to you—you may smile as you like at my thus carrying out a fancy;—but I mean to say there are those in the world whose attraction to Sophia would have been more spiritual than yours, owing to a closer natural affinity of soul; and I tell you frankly, as I have told you before, that if I could have interfered in disposing the current of events among us during the last few years, I would have sent you to find your appropriate angel elsewhere. However, since the die is cast, and you and Sophy must now be joined for better or worse, if honour hold on your side, of which I have not the shadow of a doubt, and intention continue on the other side, which I as little question,—since this is quite decided on and certain, so far as human affairs can be certain, I declare myself, my dear Mr. Harold, entirely your friend, and if you will be my obedient scholar too, I will engage to show you how you may win and wear a crown that shall make you happy here, and prepare you for a greater happiness hereafter. But a truce to *schooling* for the present; I understand my brother Drake intends to bring you to spend the first two days of Easter week with us; which will fall so early this year as next Monday and Tuesday four weeks; to which time I defer my lectures, remaining your sincere, affectionate friend,

“ANNA.”

Alas ! the visit was never paid, nor the lectures ever given. It pleased Providence, before the four weeks were expired, to visit my poor aunt with a severe stroke of paralysis, which not only crippled her frame, but prostrated her mental faculties. Hence, of the remaining years of her life, the greater part was spent in the sick chamber, and Sophia was called upon to fulfil the office of nurse as well as of companion. The old lady rallied a little in the course of the summer, but was never again herself, and never capable of a greater change than a ride in her carriage near home. For her greater convenience on this head, her single-horse vehicle was exchanged for one of larger size with two horses ; a luxury which her estate would always have permitted ; but she had been in the habit of sparing her means, that she might more largely assist the poor of her neighbourhood. Of course, all visits to our house, which had been frequent formerly, were precluded ; and as my father and Harry were prevented from visiting her, the two houses were now kept in personal communication only by means of the females.

CHAPTER V.

DANGERS OF THE TEENS, IN TOWN.

THE hopes which were reasonably entertained, that whatever was ominous of ill to my sister and her lover, would be dissipated by my aunt's skilful and kindly interference, received a sad check from the event described at the end of the last chapter. Thenceforward, other events held the course which had been framed for them, with only such expedients to drive off evil, and secure imagined good, as they suggested at the time. The intercourse of the lovers was diminished as much as possible, consistently with the purpose, which was never forgotten, of not allowing it to cease altogether. Sophia was invited home every five or six weeks, but her stay never exceeded the afternoon of one day, and an early hour of the next. She used to come over in my aunt's carriage, accompanied by one female servant, and under the further care of old Thomas, the coachman. Reaching our house about an hour after noon, she was, on the following morning, under the pretext, perhaps a true one, that she could not be longer spared from my

aunt's side, always sent back,—my mother in general going with her to spend a day or two with her sister, and then returning by a post-chaise. The intercourse by writing was, I believe, as watchfully permitted; and many of Harry's letters, I have reason to think, never reached their destination. The whole of this management had a worldly wisdom in it, while the ultimate effect, if any one of us could have seen so far, threatened to be most seriously detrimental.

There is no doubt that Harry ought to have been sent, at this period, to one of the universities. I was kept, though the acquirement of academical degrees was so important to my destined course in life, from the advantage which they offered, because it would not have been decent to send me, and keep Harry at home. Here, within the limits of an ordinary private school, well provided, though it was, with every means of instruction which could be assembled at such a place, here was my young friend cooped up, without sufficient stimulus for the exercise of his great talents, without any opposite attraction to draw him off from the passion that was consuming him. For that it was acting injuriously on his constitution soon became too manifest: his cheek lost the glow of health, his appetite failed, and his spirits flagged, so as to make his days of "moping melancholy," much more frequent than they had ever been. My father was alarmed, and testified his fears to those of his friends, who might be presumed sufficiently instructed and experienced to advise him. He asked our vicar, Dr. Brown, what, in his opinion, should be done for the youth.

“ Do you ask me,” said the doctor, “ as your priest, or as your private friend ?”

“ Why really,” said my father, “ I should not have thought of making the distinction. I do not by any means wish that your friendship to me should compromise your higher duties.”

“ Well then,” rejoined the parson, “ the Bible speaks clearly in the case : ‘ it is better to marry than burn.’ ”

“ Yes, but you know very well that the remedy cannot be used now. For even if it could be applied without a breach of trust on my part, it is clear that in marrying two such children as they really are in age, we should be preparing temptations for them hereafter greater than any that now beset them. You would not, I am sure, were you in my place, take a step so evidently wrong on all prudential grounds.”

“ Ay, now you come round to me as your private friend : yet, as you say, I must not let private regards interfere with my duty as a churchman. And what does the church prescribe when the flesh rebels,—what but fasting and prayer ?”

“ Prayer I acknowledge to be very proper in this, as in every like case, and I have already urged that duty on my young friend ; if you, on this point, will add your persuasion to mine, I shall be most happy in your assistance : but with regard to fasting, the other part of the prescription, it would be destructive to him in his present condition. He already eats too little ; his appetite is so sickly, that we are compelled to humour it in order to keep up his strength. However, he is not without some degree of pious feeling ;

and this, if increased, might enable him to stem more successfully the current of his fevered thoughts.-- Shall I send him to you?"

"I am very much afraid," said the vicar, "that my exhortations would be lost upon him. As often as I have talked to him on divine topics, and the occasions have been many, I have found him ever more ready to question and object, than to receive what I offered with faith and thankfulness. Why, it was only the other day, he told me the Bible ought to be read in connection with another great work, in order to be properly understood and interpreted. I have no doubt his principles have been tampered with by that abominable German in your school. That fellow carries about with him poison enough to taint the whole county with heterodoxy."

"I am not aware of any work of a heterodox character which has been brought among us. I assure you I am very vigilant to prevent any such importation. What work can he have alluded to?"

"Nay, I do not think he meant any written book, except in a figurative sense. If the God that inspired the Bible, said he, is the same God that opens to us the book of the wide creation, the two books must agree; and so he went on with some latitudinarian remarks, the tendency of which was, to cast a reflection on divines who read and comment on the Bible, without deriving assistance from other quarters. and without bringing different parts of the Bible to interpret each other. As if a boy like him might set himself up to teach those who have grown old in the study of divinity."

“I will not attempt to justify him,” said my father, “if his manner toward you, in expressing his opinion, was deficient in modesty, and respect to your sacred function. But I must confess I cannot find fault with the opinion itself. Nor must you suppose he forms opinions lightly, or borrows them from others without making them his own by deep meditation :—you must have perceived that he is not a common youth. I have heard him express the opinion you have just mentioned, and have heard him further say, with reference to theological learning, that it carries with it, in almost every part, palpable evidence of the subtilizing spirit of the schoolmen, from which it should be the endeavour of the present age to set it free,—that the Bible itself is free from all subtilizing upon words,—that its reasoning proceeds from things,—that its language is rhetorical, adapted to reach the understanding through the *feeling* of what is right and good,—and that such language requires to be liberally interpreted, not tied down by subtile definitions, which may hold good in one place, but be quite at variance with the context, nay the whole scope of Bible doctrine in another.”

“And do you allow a boy like that, thus to deliver opinions which go to impeach some of the wisest heads in Christendom? You may judge of his deficiency in the truths of Christianity by his failure in Christian self-government.”

“That criterion will hardly do,” said my father. “You must show that he does not see the right path, and desire to walk in it, before you impeach the soundness of his knowledge. We were talking of the

utility of prayer in obtaining aid for the weakness of the flesh. I imagine he does not deny that practical truth."

"At all events, it seems to fail in his case," rejoined the vicar, "if it is true that he has had recourse to it at all. And what is to be done with him, if you cannot subject him to fasting, and you cannot make him pray effectually?"

"That is precisely the point on which I wish for your advice," said my father.

"Why I see nothing that remains, if you cannot repress the impulses of the flesh, but to keep him away from the world, and its temptations. The world, the flesh, and the devil, always go together."

"When you speak of the world, of course you mean the bad part of the world. There is surely another part; and I am very much afraid that our fault has been, not allowing him to go sufficiently into the world."

"Ay, that's always the way with you laymen: you are always for explaining away the Bible. But I have a solemn duty to perform, and I say, '*Keep him away from the world.*'"

My father, remembering the adage that in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom, and not being quite satisfied with the advice of the doctor of divinity, betook himself next to a doctor of physic. Of Dr. Cleland, to whom he applied, and who was one of the two extra doctors that had attended Harry more than five years earlier, it might perhaps be said, as was said of his predecessor something more than four hundred years before by the father of English poetry, that

"His studie was but litel in the Bible."

Yet was he a man of much experience and observation, independently of his medical knowledge ; and on this account my father thought it worth while to require his presence and opinion. When he came, my father plainly and succinctly related Harry's history since the time of his illness in the eleventh year of his age ; and then sent the doctor to examine the patient. On his return my father inquired,

“ Well, what must we do with this young fellow ? ”

“ *Send him into the world,* ” said the doctor.

“ Doubtless you mean under precautions which would keep him from courses he might be inclined to take.”

“ I mean no such thing. I presume you are pretty sure he would not commit theft, or murder, or anything else that would compromise him in the eye of the law, or of that general opinion which is the law of private life ; and therefore I say, send him into the world, and let him do as he likes. I will answer for him, that, being thus let loose, he will find his own cure.”

This advice, which I hardly need say, was most repulsive to my father's way of thinking, left him in the same perplexity which had led him to seek counsel from the learned. What should he now do ? I dare say some councils were held within doors, and perhaps the question was debated whether Harry should be sent to Oxford or Cambridge to try how such a change might operate on his spirit, and through that, on his bodily health ; but if ever such a proposition was suggested, it sunk before the weight of other considerations. Finally, what seemed to be a medium

arrangement was determined on. Mr. M., the principal of the mercantile house in London, who had often repeated his invitations, was entreated to appropriate a chamber in his house for Harry, that he might go to, and return from London at his pleasure. The facility for travelling which railroads had created, placed the two houses within little more than three hours' reach of each other; and nothing seemed more likely to work a change in Harry's thoughts and frame, than this opportunity of interchanging, whenever he pleased, the stir of London with the quiet of the country.

It was during the year 1842, the first day of which had seen my father and Harry riding from my aunt's residence, that the circumstances so far shadowed out, arose. The arrangement I have just mentioned, was concluded at the close of the year. Harry had entered on his eighteenth year, and Christmas-day had passed without the presence of Sophia. But to make some amends for her absence, she came home on Saturday the last day of the year, to pass the remainder of that day, and the whole of Sunday with us, with purpose to return at an early hour on the Monday. It was stated, at the same time, that she could not be permitted to renew her visit for some two or three months. Her aunt was about to part with a faithful servant, who was going to be married; and Sophia's ministration would be required, without any intermission, till this gap in the household was filled up. It was calculated that at Easter, which fell late this new year, namely, not till the third week in April, she might perhaps be spared for the whole week. Such was the

prospect placed before the lovers when they met on the day above stated ; and I hardly need add, that if they met with rapture, they parted in agony. As usual, the agony would have been only on one side, if Sophia could have maintained the quiet of her own grief : but having witnessed Harry's waning health, and being told by him, that her absence, and nothing else, was the cause of his suffering, she felt as strongly as he did the pain of separation. But it was the last time that such agony on such occasion was felt ; and one might rejoice in the fact, if the greater temperance of passion with regard to my sister, which Harry shortly after succeeded in obtaining, had been the effect of a nobler sentiment absorbing and refining the lower feeling. Then indeed might the years yet to come before their destined marriage have been passed in growing better acquainted with each other : Harry would have had nothing to hide from my sister, and she, seeing more and more into the recesses of his heart, would have been able to make him more and more a part of herself : while he, fashioning his own soul to the purity of hers, would have loved her with such affection as brings back Paradise to earth, and prepares for habitation in a brighter Paradise hereafter. — It is my province, however, to trace not what might have come to pass, but what did come ; and I proceed with my task.

My parents, in permitting Harry to take up his occasional abode in London, must have calculated on a greater degree of domestic restraint than the merchant's house afforded. Mr. M. was a married man, but had no children ; and as his house and table were

open to those who brought letters of introduction from his correspondents, there was almost as much change of society, and freedom from restraint, as might be found in an hotel. From ten to fifteen daily sat down to his hospitable board ; but, except on extraordinary occasions, there were only two ladies present, Mrs. M. and her matronly companion ; the rest were gentlemen from various parts of Europe, most of them young, and familiar with life as it is led by young men in the continental capitals. However, Harry soon found opportunities of moving in a larger sphere of society. An accidental introduction to a gentleman of rank, procured an invitation to an aristocratical party at the West-end of London ; and this was followed by unceasing invitations of a like kind ; so great was the impression made by his handsome person, his youth, his brilliant talents, his comprehensive understanding, and, above all, the report of his wealth, which, in the usual way, rumour had magnified. My parents would have felt unqualified pleasure, when they learned that so much activity had produced the best effect upon his spirits and his health, had they not feared that this enlarged sphere of action, was likely to make him forget altogether his earlier connections, and his understood pledge. But of this, there was in truth no danger. Throughout his whole career, my young friend, whatever were his other delinquencies, maintained, inviolate, every trust to which he had once assented ; nor did he ever forget that, when the time should come, he was to fulfil the pledge which his early manhood had made, with regard to my sister. I speak in a worldly sense when I say thus much in

his favour ; on other ground, my commendation must be withheld. For that purity of conduct which a high sense of moral obligation should have imposed upon one pledged as he was, I am not able to give him credit. But looking with worldly eyes, the effect was good, and the doctor who had founded his advice on mere physical considerations, might have pointed to the effect in proof of his wisdom. For this was the effect : Harry no longer looked forward to his marriage with a fevered impatience which injured his health :—he was content to wait the decorous time :—it was a good that he desired, but only a greater good than he at present found, and with this he was able in the mean time to solace himself. His letters to my parents and my sister indicated this soul-purchased tranquillity ; and they, in their blindness,—at least, I am sure it was blindness in my poor innocent sister,—rejoiced at the change.

When, at a subsequent time, my young friend analyzed the contending elements of his nature, and reasoned on his short-comings at this important era of his life, it was thus he put the case against himself. “ Everything truly valuable has its price, and the price must be paid, or the treasure resigned. The treasure which I had to gain, was a self-wrought soul so exclusively intertwined with Sophia’s, a love so raised above the lower element from which it took its beginning, as to render licentiousness impossible, by reason of the disgust which would have been felt at the least approach to it. But then comes a physical question, to which moral writers seem to shut their eyes as being a very awkward one to allude to ;

although its proper solution is indispensable in any step we may be inclined to take, either for self-advancement in moral good, or the improvement of public morals. The question is this, whether the appetite whose object is the continuation of the species, must or must not be placed in the same category with that which obliges us, day by day, to administer to our otherwise perishing frame. Now, with regard to one half of the human species in a state of civilization, the question is practically met by the fact, that we require from woman, and we do not require in vain, that the former mentioned appetite shall be sanctified to certain ends which civilized life demands ; that, often, for these ends, it must be held in abeyance ; and sometimes altogether repressed. Must we say, of the other half of our species, that the subjugation of the appetite in question is beyond our power?—that *man* must be indulged, while the law is stringent with regard to *woman* ? But then, it will be answered, there is no necessity to enforce the law on *him* : on woman, so far as we fence her in from the savageness to which we were born, the law is indispensable for the happiness of society : for this is the law which our epic bard so forcibly records,—the law by which

‘ Adulterous lust was driven from men,
Among the bestial herds to range.’

This is the law by which,

‘ Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.’

But why force this law prematurely on man ? why

not leave him to the wildness of his youth, till he is tamed down to temperance and virtue? So speaks the world; and in so speaking what does it say but that there **MUST** be, as doubtless there very long will be—**MUST** be as a *principle*, and not merely as a contingent evil—a class of women kept apart from all that is holy in life, to save the rest of the sex from pollution? Will such a proposition bear the light? And if not, our argument brings us to the conclusion that man is bound to take his share in the restraint of the sexual appetite, which lifts society from savageness to civilization. And what makes him less capable of it than woman but the difference of education arising out of almost all he hears, and sees, and reads? For my part," continued my friend, (for it must be borne in mind that it is his argument I am recording,) "for my part I acknowledge myself a delinquent, justly liable to the penalty of failure, howbeit the upward path I had to tread was of no slight difficulty. It might have been an easier one, if the early excitement of passion had been guarded against by occupying the soul with other themes; it would still have been a possible one when I was thrown into the midst of metropolitan society, had I found an opinion prevalent, that, quite as much in man as in woman, perfection of character is unattainable without chastity. I found no such opinion. The opinion I did encounter was this, that to despoil innocence, or bring the arts of seduction within the sacred precincts of a family home, was indeed detestable; but all else in a young unmarried man was venial. With such principles as had grown up with me, I easily avoided what was

thus indicated to be criminal, and took society's permission for the rest ; at what cost to myself, and to her whom I had brought within the current of my destiny, I wish the world to be informed."

My reader must pardon me for interposing the foregoing reflections, before the time arrived which matured them. I now go back to take up the thread of events belonging to this memoir ; and have to state that my young friend was so completely engrossed by his engagements in London, that he allowed Easter to come without a thought of revisiting his early home. Then, indeed, as Sophia was to spend the Easter week with her parents, he made it a point to come down among us. Nothing could be more happy, to outward appearance, than the meeting of the lovers. The former wild transport on Harry's side, was softened down to unexceptionable propriety ; and all parties felt so much at ease, that the week may be numbered among the few golden passages which occur in the history of family life. In Harry's deportment, it was impossible not to perceive the effect which fashionable society had produced. As his understanding was eclectic, so were his outward habits readily susceptible of moulding influences ; and what he admired became a part of his nature, without the consciousness of imitation. If this had been all he received from the great metropolis, it would have been well : but the experienced in life could not look at the expression of his eye, and the changed cast of features and of complexion, without knowing that a change had taken place of sad and ominous import. It was well for Harry that he had not to meet with my aunt : she

would have detected the signs of corruption in the heart's core, which, seen in another, had kept her single through life ; and would have warned my innocent sister against the similar danger. But, as I have intimated, nothing of this was perceived by the parties concerned, and the week passed away with every sign of apparent satisfaction. I say *apparent* satisfaction ; for it is impossible that Harry could have felt at ease with himself, when the presence of my sister's purity reminded him of the stains he carried with him, stains which might indeed still be washed away ; but he could not help being sensible that he had rendered any advance upward toward her virtue now more difficult than ever. This might have been seen in the libertine glance with which every now and then he scanned the more ripened charms of her person, the greater fulness of her form, the increased intelligence and tenderness of her mild blue eye, and the darker tinge which had crept over the light colour of her abundant tresses. It was nothing better than the glance of a Mussulman when he calls to mind the several beauties of his harem, and cannot but have the taste to distinguish, by special preference, that one of them who joins, to her other superlative attractions, the sweet charm of innocence and freshness. And thus, with its various emotions, some kept secret, but the greater part communicated from breast to breast, and yielding more or less pleasure, the week so much desired came to an end. My sister returned to her duties at my aunt's bed-side, and Harry went back to London in order to complete his first season of fashionable life.

Meanwhile, time was bringing forward other matters to which I am very reluctant to allude, but which, as they were connected with the principal subject of this memoir, I am forced to notice. And perhaps my notice of them will be sufficient, if I lay before my reader the following letter, which, in the autumn of the then current year, I received from my sister :—

“September 1843.

“My dear Frank,—I am more than half inclined to be very, very angry with you and Harriet. You sly ones ! but I have found you out. I suppose you know that Mrs. Norris spent her three days’ holiday last week in our neighbourhood. She is a native of these parts, and came down by Williams’s van to see her relations. She called in consequence on aunt and me, and we wormed all out of her that is going on at the cottage. We find that you borrow papa’s horse whenever you like, and that the animal finds his way of his own accord from our house to Highmore Cottage, as regularly as Dumbiedikes’ pony did to Jeanie Deans’. Now, why could not I have been informed of this pleasing intelligence at first hand, instead of learning it at second hand so meanly ? Depend upon it, you shall both have a good scolding at the first opportunity ; and so make up your minds for it.

“Poor aunt is a little—but only a very little—more her self this last month : I mean as to her speech and memory ; for she is still quite infirm in her limbs. She knows I am now writing to you and on what subject ; and desires her love to you, and a

blessing on your suit. I suppose I must relent a little ; so twenty kisses to you, dear Frank, which, if they lie heavy on your hands, you can pass over to Harriet ; believing me always

“Your most affectionate sister,

“SOPHIA.

“P.S.—I am aware of the standard joke respecting the postscript of a woman’s letter ; and as I do not wish to disappoint you, I lay myself wilfully open to your mirth, by declaring to you that my real purpose in writing to you at present, remains to be stated. Of course you know that Charles has several commissions in our neighbourhood, which have brought him repeatedly near to us. Yet he has never called, but has been, in a most mysterious manner, tracking my steps, so as to be observed by everybody but myself. I am told that he has been seen looking at me through hedges ; dodging for my approach from behind a tree, and going round it as I drew nigh so as to escape being seen in return ; peeping at me over aunt’s pales while I was feeding the poultry in the morning ; and using other ingenious means of the same kind for the same purpose. Now when I call to mind certain shy words he spoke to me this time two years ago while I was having lessons from him here at my aunt’s, before I went home at the Christmas, I cannot but understand what these foolish little stratagems imply ; and I am sure that both you and Harriet must be inclined to take part with me in persuading him to act with a better sense of what is due to himself, and his own worthy heart.

Had my heart been disengaged—but it is vain to talk of what might have been :—you and he will be brothers in due time, and then he will be my brother also ; and a sister's love, such as you have from me, dear Frank, such shall he have : and I hope he will provide another sister for me ; for sure I am that many a worthy girl, much more deserving his regard than I am, will be but too happy to own and to return his love. Now tell him, when he comes down again, to call and see us, and take my portrait if he likes, and dine with us as often as he can, and be on friendly terms without shyness and mystery.—Do you know that even aunt has been informed of his wanderings after me, and she surprised me the other day by quoting most accurately the following lines,—(you know that next below her Bible, Shakspeare is all in all with her) :—

‘ *He never told his love,
But let concealment, like a worm i’ the bud,
Feed on his damask cheek : he pined in thought,
And, with a green and yellow melancholy,
He sat like Patience on a monument
Smiling at Grief.*

“ I took down the book to see if she had repeated the lines accurately, and found them quite right, except her slyly changing *she* into *he* :—so you see her memory is not quite so bad after all.

“ Postscript the second.—I had a letter from Harry yesterday : he tells me the London season is quite over, but he shall not come home yet, because I am not at home. You have no idea what grand aristocratic company he has kept. He seems to have been

on bowing and visiting acquaintance with all the nobility in London. Now I know papa, mamma, and aunt, think that all this is likely to make him forget me ; but I have not the slightest misgiving on the subject : I know his noble, honourable heart too well. I am sure that all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, would not draw me from Harry ; and, though my gifts are poor compared with his, I am equally sure that he will not be drawn away from me.

“Postscript the third.—Don’t show this letter to Charles : you can manage what it requires without producing it. Neither need you show it to Harriet. Leave it behind you when you go to the cottage, or burn it at once,—that will be best.”

CHAPTER VI.

AFFLICTIONS WHICH MAY, AND MAY NOT BE
ESCAPED.

MY parents were not at all satisfied with the effect of the arrangement, which allowed Harry to pass and repass between London and his early home at his option. His option was so much in favour of London, that only when Sophia was at home, did the inclination seize him to join our circle, and again take up the thread of his first pleasures,—the enjoyments that had formed the happiness of his boyhood and supervening manhood. The remedy would have been, to have had Sophia always at home; but there were prudential reasons which put that plan out of the question. I shall not inquire into all these reasons; but one of them was this, that in the actual state of my aunt's declining faculties, she could not be spared from her side. My aunt doated on her, and was miserable if she was absent for a day. My parents knew the charitable dispositions of the old lady, and that any imagined neglect on the part of her relations, would very probably have the effect of turning what property she had to leave, from private to public recipients; on which account, they never tempted So-

phia, to leave her aunt, whom indeed she dearly loved, by what no doubt she would have loved better, namely, invitations to spend weeks and months at a time, under the same roof with her destined husband. As she met Harry so seldom, yet had him with her constantly in her thoughts, her love grew into something of an ideal worship: she saw him in prospect as she saw the joys of heaven, and with an humble feeling of being almost as little worthy of the one as of the other. Meanwhile, such was the character of his love, that it was removing him further and further from the standard of excellence she had set up for worship in her mind; and thus, instead of becoming acquainted with each other's weaknesses, and then drawing nearer to one another as two fallible beings with mutual sufferance, in order to lend mutual aid, they were insensibly pursuing contrary roads. "But," the worldly wise will say, "there is no more in all this than courtships commonly exhibit: let them come together in marriage, and, with upright principles on both sides, the mutual sufferance and mutual aid will follow. On her side, there will indeed be great disappointment; but her love will be greater, and will survive it; while on his side, he will soon find the superior pleasures of a married life, and look back with loathing on his bachelor days, so as to fulfil the adage that a reformed rake makes the best husband."—I will not stop to combat this low-pitched reasoning, nor show that, even if we could admit it, the facts which it assumes are unable to bear the scrutiny of even a private and narrow experience, but will proceed with my detail of occurrences.

My father, finding that Harry was not inclined to return even when the autumn was far advanced, determined to go up to London, and, if possible, persuade him into another state of mind. Arriving at Mr. M.'s town residence, he learned that all the family, except Harry and two of the servants, were out of town. Harry was not at home at the time ; and, on inquiring into his habits, he found that he breakfasted late, dined at a neighbouring tavern, sometimes used his horse, which was at livery close at hand, and seldom came home till late at night, sometimes not till night had given way to morning. Yet it did not appear that he was led into excesses by strongly excited spirits :—on the contrary, he was always seen to be thoughtful, and rather melancholy. The truth was, as my father found, that Harry, after six or seven months of passionate devotion to æsthetic pursuits,—after mingling with those who stood highest in fashionable, in literary, and scientific society,—had fallen back into one of his constitutional fits of philosophical abstraction, and had deemed no place so fit to indulge it in, as half-deserted London. For, be it remembered, that in these fits, he had his pleasures, but they were not æsthetic pleasures,—they were not pleasures which the imagination gilds and the soul receives,—they were wholly unimaginative,—they were what his awakened philosophy deemed real and substantial, and belonged not to the soul but to the body. It might be said for them, that in a certain worldly sense, they were *honest*—they were seen as what they were, and not coloured over by the hues of the soul to seem like virtues. His delinquent practice was as far

removed as possible from that of the refined voluptuary, the elegant pupil of the Chesterfield school, who makes a merit of hunting with the toils of intrigue and seduction, and turns with contempt from purchasable game. But conceding thus much on the score of honest and upright principle to Harry's dereliction from strictness of life, what sadness to know,—if indeed any of us could then have certainly known what of course he took some pains to hide,—what sadness to know that a man liable to these debasing habits, was the husband elect of my pure-hearted, innocent sister ; and to be aware, at the same time, as I was aware, that an affection worthy as her own, had grown up in a bosom of kindred sentiments, and equal constancy ! But the channel had been dug along which the stream of events was to run, and none of us had the present skill or knowledge, even if we had had the will, to turn its course.

Harry's fit of abstraction was not, however, at the present time, so deep or so fixed, as not to yield readily to my father's summons. He came home with him the very next day, travelling by rail, and bringing his horse ; an extremely fine animal, which he had obtained in exchange for the one he had taken to London, having of course had to pay for the difference in value. My father rejoiced at the circumstance, because he was very desirous of renewing in Harry a love of field sports, in which, when the inclination was once taken, he was sure to excel, as he did in everything he undertook. The effect was answerable to my father's wish. Harry recovered, for a time, a healthy tone of mind, alternately engaged as he was in hunt-

ing, shooting, fishing, reading the German poets with Mr. Pfeffer, going again through some of the classics with Mr. Gordon, and reading English with my father ; besides musical practice with the occasional masters, and sketching from nature among the beautiful scenes of our neighbourhood. All was well, till a visit of a very few hours from my sister, disturbed the balance. With her, came passion and rapture—I mean on his side specially—and her departure was sure to leave him in a state of melancholy abstraction. In this state, the home she had quitted became distasteful to him. As he was not permitted to follow her, he changed the scene for London, and did not return till, partly through persuasion, partly through reviving inclination, he came back to his country haunts, and his country avocations. —I am not now speaking of one time in particular at which all I have described took place, but of a succession of times ; of times that brought us near to the conclusion of the year 1845, when Harold was about completing the twentieth year of his age.

In carrying on my tale thus far, a tale of mingled good and ill, as every true record of human affairs must be, the ill has been chiefly in omen, and not in event. The time was coming when the current was to set in strongly against me and mine. And yet our afflictions were such only as other families are liable to ; nor should I have dreamed of stepping with them beyond the privacy to which they properly belong, but for their connection with him, whose practice and whose theory in filling up his brief span of life, have left, as he thought, and as I think, important matter

to record. And that I may reach, as speedily as may be, the results to which my narrative tends, I shall comprise the further events that regard myself and my family within as brief a space as possible.

Time, as I have said above, had crept on till Harry was near completing his twentieth year. It was the end of November, when we had reason to think my aunt would be induced to spare Sophia for a fortnight in the following month, so as to assist in celebrating Harold's birth-day on the eighteenth, and Christmas-day on the same day in the following week. Harold, who had gone up to London at the end of October, was made acquainted, by letter, with this arrangement ; and he promised, by letter, to meet Sophia, on the day when he was certified she would reach home. In the mean time, my aunt was seized by another stroke of paralysis, and reduced by it to such a state of utter helplessness, that my sister did not dare to leave her. She therefore wrote to Harry, to say she was prevented from coming home at the expected time ; and shortly after we received a letter from him, informing us, that having an opportunity of visiting Paris with a friend who was able to introduce him to the best society in that gay capital, he had determined to take the opportunity of testing his proficiency in the continental languages, and furthering his knowledge of the world ; and my father, who saw no use in opposing a young man who would soon be his own master, offered no decided opposition to his purpose. To Paris, then, he went ; and our Christmas (1845) passed off with much more gloom than we had hoped. My mother was not very well ; and my father, whose

health had in general been robust, had scarcely entered on the new year, when he fell into a severe rheumatic fever, which kept him away from the duties of his school. I was too young to be his adequate substitute ; and Mr. Gordon, who, for many years, had been the master immediately under him, had, within the previous year, left my father, and established himself in the neighbourhood ; and, by the weight of his abilities, and other means, had carried with him a great part of our connection. Mr. Pfeffer had also left us, attracted to his father-land by one of the popular demonstrations in favour of liberty, of which every month's report then brought intelligence ; nor have we heard of him from that time to the present. We had not many pupils ; and these were so advanced in years and proficiency, that we did not calculate on keeping them beyond the ensuing summer. Under all these adverse circumstances, there was too much to be thought of, and too much to be done by my sister and myself, to allow of great concern for anything or any person beyond the limits of our actual family circle. She continued to receive letters from Harry : but while he lamented the distresses we felt, he said nothing of any immediate purpose to be one among us. He spoke indeed of the approaching time when he should be of age, and left it to be understood, as a matter of course, that the settlement of his property, and the fulfilling of his matrimonial engagement, would take place together ; but he did not write in the style of a lover who pours from his bosom all he thinks, and all he feels, and all he does. On the last point, at least, it seemed to me that he was very

reserved : but Sophia, who was conscious of nothing in her daily life that needed concealment, was unable to suspect anything that needed it in Harry's ; so that her confidence in him remained untouched, and her prospect of a happy future, unclouded.

Between that flattering future which sustained my sister's hopes and spirits, there lay, however, a vale of great family distress to traverse. The rheumatism, which at first seized my father in his limbs, could not be prevented from making way to other parts of his frame, and at last reaching his heart, deprived us of a parent whom it was no merit in us to have loved and honoured truly and unceasingly. But this loss only led the way to further sorrows. Our other parent, who had been in declining health for a considerable time, had exhausted her remaining strength in nursing her beloved partner, and she never recovered from the blow which his death inflicted ; so that the latter part of July found my sister and myself mourners in an almost empty house, with prospects not a little uncertain. My father had conducted his school with too much liberality to save much ready money ; and his mode of livelihood seemed for me closed up. It is true that the house and outbuildings, with one or two acres of adjoining land, were ours, the purchase of my mother's inheritance ; and we might securely count on what my aunt had to leave. She, poor lady, at the present moment, was almost in a state of unconsciousness, and knew nothing of my sister's temporary absence, or the cause of it. My sister was eager to return to her ; but some deliberation was necessary, after my mother had been consigned to the tomb,

respecting the present disposition of the house and appertinents, and also of myself. After some consultation with our vicar and other friends, we determined to leave the house and premises in the hands of an agent, to be let in any way that promised the greatest immediate advantage; and that, for the present, I should take up my abode at my aunt's, along with my sister.

To our aunt's, then, we went, and in the solace of each other's company lost the violence of our first sorrow. The heart quickly reconciles itself to griefs, which, sooner or later, must be encountered: nor should I have considered our present condition an unhappy one, but for the apprehension of a blight that came from one quarter, and from one only. This inexplicable young man, this wanderer sprung from we knew not whom, had come across our quiet path only, as it should seem, to disturb it. I could not help thinking how clear our humble prospect might now be, if the shadow which he cast upon it could but be removed. If he had never existed, or had never come across us, the sweet affections of my sister's heart would have been free for such an impression, as a love pure and stable as her own would have fixed. And, indeed, my present secret hope was, not that the wanderer might come back,—for I had no thought that if he did come back, he would come back worthy of her,—but that she would learn at last the necessity of renouncing him, and would then, as a consequence, be approachable by other and worthier solicitations. How little, when I thought in this manner, did the indomitable constancy of a woman's

heart enter into my calculation ! My first attempt to turn her mind into the wished-for direction, was met by so decided an expression of a mind already made up, that I never voluntarily repeated it. And the ground for such an attempt was moreover weakened by a letter which reached us from the object of so much anxiety, dated from Florence, and which, with a plausible excuse for what seemed so unkind, contained a promise of return by the next birth-day, when the power would no longer be wanting to complete the engagement for so many years delayed. In the mean time, before he settled down to the tranquil happiness of domestic life, Harold was desirous, as he said, to make the most of his present opportunity of travel : he was moving about, without much plan, from place to place, and could not say where letters would reach him ; but this he hoped would be of no moment, since we should hear from him again at the end of November,—which letter would be the prelude of his return, so as to be with us in time for his birth-day on the eighteenth of December. To myself, this letter seemed heartless ; to my sister, whose trust was unbounded, it reflected the constancy which she felt in her own breast. I did not wish to disturb her happy security ; but the doubts I concealed from her, perplexed me exceedingly, for I saw not what preparations it would be wise to make. Our house was yet on hand : should I keep it so, and, returning to it with my sister, prepare for the day of rejoicing ? Or take no step of preparation at all, but wait the event ? The effect of the latter alternative, if the expected one fulfilled his promise, would be awkward ;—the effect of

the other, if he did not fulfil it, would be to increase the bitterness and shame of disappointment. I therefore took a middle course. A week before the eighteenth, we returned to a temporary place of residence in our native village ; though it grieved us to leave only for a short time our poor aunt, who, however, we knew would be well tended, and be kept unconscious of our absence. To the small house engaged for this express purpose, we invited for the eighteenth the vicar and his wife, and four other of our old neighbours, two of them a married couple, the others, two maiden sisters. Another very brief letter had reached us from Harold confirming the purpose of the former one, but stating that the time of his arrival might possibly be delayed even to the day itself. We expected him with impatience up to the day, but when it came, he had not arrived.

On the eighteenth of December, 1846, the day of his majority, our small party met to luncheon, in the hope that before the next meal, or at least before the day closed, our number would be augmented by him, on whose account we were assembled. Hour passed after hour, but he came not. The evening had long set in, and he was not come. Sophia was excessively alarmed, not from any misgivings of her lover's faith, but from a firm persuasion that nothing could detain him but serious accident or sickness. She tried her utmost, indeed, to be mistress of her feelings, and to take comfort from our suggestion of the many other causes by which a traveller may be delayed. Yet she could not quiet her fears ; and a circumstance happened late in the evening, proving how much the

pressure on her nerves was disturbing her fancy. The fact indeed, when I subsequently related it to a medical friend who is fully persuaded of the truth of mesmerism and the wonders of *clairvoyance*, received from him a different interpretation. But without either adopting or rejecting his interpretation, I proceed to the fact.

It was about ten o'clock, when, as we began to think of coffee, and then separating for the night, the vicar proposed that we should kneel down to evening prayer. Now I am ashamed to confess that, as far as regards myself, I am incapable, through old habit, of listening to our vicar while praying or preaching, without a sensation of drowsiness. I do not charge my sister with the same liability, because her piety was always active and fervent; but it might be that while upon her knees, with her face turned to a dark part of the room, she felt in some degree the same oppression as myself. In short, we were all perfectly quiet while the vicar was reading a long collect, when a shriek from Sophia, accompanied by a start that brought her upon her feet, roused us all at the same instant, and crowded us in terror around her, to learn what was the matter. It was a minute or two before we could get any answer from her, and then she begged our pardon for having been, as she said, so foolish. She had seen something—it was the effect only of imagination as she now perceived—but so distinct and vivid was the impression, that she could not help the outcry she had uttered. Upon our pressing her to say what she had seen, she requested the prayers might be proceeded with; and when they were finished, she told us she

had plainly seen Harry advancing toward her, with a shadowy indistinct figure looking over his shoulder, and that upon her shrieking, this figure seemed to force him back, and in an instant, the whole vision was gone. We comforted her as well as we could by pretending to laugh at her, but most of us, I believe, were even more frightened than herself. One of the ladies did not much improve the general feeling, by saying to Sophia, when a sort of shudder came over her, such as is common in a certain state of the nerves, and such as, with some people, always produces the same remark, "Why, my love, somebody is walking over your grave!" In short, our efforts to seem cheerful were all in vain; and conscious that we did but increase each other's gloom, we had no sooner taken coffee, than we felt it best to separate, with hopes that a brighter day was at hand, to repay us for the melancholy of the one which had brought us together.

The next day, however, only renewed our expectation and disappointment; and the next, and the next, and the next. We then determined—I speak of my sister and myself—that she should return to our aunt's, and that I should repair to the house of our mercantile friends in London, in order to ascertain whether any intelligence had been received from Harold, and if not, what steps could, or ought, to be taken in the emergency. I had scarcely reached the house, when letters arrived from Harold, requiring his trustees to remit to him all the documents necessary for the conveyance of his property; letters entirely on business, and including none for my sister or myself. All previous letters to us had come through the London firm;

but supposing that, on this occasion, he had sent to us, direct, and that I should find his letters on my return ; and having previously left instructions at our native place, that whatever might arrive for us there, was to be forwarded to my aunt's, I hastened from London to join my sister, fully persuaded that she would be in possession of all the information I had gone to seek in London. She met me on my arrival with breathless eagerness for my intelligence ; evidently with none to give on her side. " Is he safe ? Is he well ? " " He *is* safe and well ; so much I have learned, and no more. " " Then, Frank, I am satisfied. " With all appearances to the contrary, she still trusted in the constancy of his affections, and patiently expected, what she was sure would at length arrive, a satisfactory explanation of his conduct. But month after month passed by, and no letter came, nor anything from the agents in London affording a ground for hope. The rumours were of a contrary kind. He had formed, it was said, some unworthy connections ; and in particular, one with a female, the orphan daughter of an Englishman of bad reputation, who had amassed money in his native country by nefarious practices, and had had this child by an Italian who had lived with him :—but these were rumours only ; and the untiring affection of my devoted sister was proof against them. It might sometimes be seen, indeed, that her mind was ill at ease ; but she wrestled with sadness, and, in appearance, was the conqueror. She was, more even than usual, anxious to have her mind engaged, and her hands full of occupation. It was so far a fortunate circumstance that the entire

management of our aunt's house and affairs rested solely with her. At the same time, she did not allow her pencil and her piano to be quite idle. She set me, besides, to improve her in Latin; of which, as became a schoolmaster's daughter, she had some rudimentary knowledge; and when I spent the evening at home, we took it by turns to read aloud some English work. I was not always at home. My rides were much longer now than they used to be; and the distance from home on one day was never retraversed till the next. Thus passed seven or eight months; and my expectation that her heart would throw off an unworthy burthen, and open itself to a suit of better omen, was still as distant as ever, when a letter directed to me, was transmitted by the London firm. It ran as follows:

“Rome, November 1847.

“Long before you receive this, you will have made up your mind, Frank, that I am a man destitute of probity and honour; and though I could perhaps clear myself of this reproach with worldly-thinking people, yet as regards your sister I deserve it. My expectation and wish is, that, by this time, you have formed, for her and yourself, new plans of life, in which I am altogether unconsidered;—if not, I call on you to form such plans without delay. I am aware that, in point of property, your sister may not find an alliance equal to that which my prospects opened: but she shall not be an eventual loser: she, or you, or your heirs, will inherit all I possess; and, meantime, one half of it shall be her marriage settlement the moment the occasion shall arise, or shall now be hers if the occa-

sion has arrived. I expect you will not take these promises in earnest from a man who has already broken his faith ; but I am coming to London to give them legal validity. And as to my past breach of faith, without meaning to shield myself from any of the censure that belongs to it, I have simply to say that it has not been premeditated. Even till within the last month, I have entertained the hope of regaining my moral strength, and returning to you, a lapsed and imperfect being indeed, but a being with some remaining powers of improvement. That hope, and all other hope, is gone : I have now neither hope, nor fear, nor love, nor hate. My friendship for you is dead, and my love for your sister is such love as she must not come near. I have only intellect and appetites, with just so much imagination as appetite retains in its service. I know what is right and wrong ; of which my present letter may be some evidence ; and so far as my appetites interfere not, I can carry my knowledge into act ; but beyond such power, I am a hog or a goat. I know the good and evil of life ; but I know, at the same time, that the good is beyond my reach, and I wallow in the evil as my only good. My change of person is correspondent : what was said of the French philosopher, is literally true of me :

‘ I am so wicked, profligate, and thin,
I look like Milton’s Devil, Death, and Sin.’

“ Such is the being you will have to meet on my arrival ; for it is necessary, on several accounts, that you should meet me. If you ask what has been the cause of this miserable change in me, all I can say is,

that I HAVE TAKEN A PRICE FOR MY SOUL. On the eighteenth of December when I promised to be with you, the compact was made, and I am now in the full fruition of its consequences,—I am now furnishing a practical illustration of the legend of Faustus.

“As soon as I have fixed myself in London, which I expect to do in less than a fortnight, I will write to you again.

“HAROLD FREMDLING.”

The immediate impression which this letter made on me will doubtless be the reader's:—Harold was insane. The case did not seem without a parallel. In the eighty-eighth number of “THE ADVENTURER,” Hawkesworth records the authenticated monomania of one Simon Brown, “a dissenting minister of eminent intellectual abilities, who, refusing to join any longer in the duties of his function, assigned with great reluctance to those who asked the reason, the following cause—‘That he had fallen under the sensible displeasure of God, who had caused his rational soul to perish, and had left him only an animal life in common with brutes.’” This man, Hawkesworth goes on to record, during the period of his insanity, wrote *A Defence of the Religion of Nature, and the Christian Revelation*, in answer to Tindal's *Christianity as old as the Creation*; a work allowed at that time to be the best which the controversy had produced; while a dedication to Queen Caroline, the consort of George II., which the friends of the monomaniac suppressed, though they preserved the copy as Hawkesworth gives it, places the character of his

calamity beyond doubt or question. With this case in my remembrance, the interpretation of the letter before me seemed but too easy. My difficulty was, how, and by what degrees, to break the sad fact to my sister. I did not dare read the letter to her. I told her he had written to state his purpose to be in London soon ; a promise which, as he had broken his former one, we had no good ground to count upon : that if he did come, it would be with no intention of seeing her ; but that, as he had failed in his engagement to her, he was ready, so he said, to make all the amends in his power. I then read the sentence from his letter beginning with “ I am aware that in point of property,” &c. What would be the effect upon her of this sentence, I very well knew. However it might have been with others, I was quite sure the alliance with Harold had never recommended itself to my sister but on the purest grounds of disinterested affection : she seemed thunderstruck that such an offer could be made ; that he could so misconceive the character of her love. “ Do you know, Frank,” said she, when her emotion allowed her power to speak, “ do you know by what fancy I have been sustained during these months of fear, and hope, and love, and grief ? it has been a predominant hope that he would come back poor. The only cause I could think of, after you told me he had required the conveyance of his property to take place in Italy,—the only cause I could imagine why he had not come to us, was,—that, in his youthful reckless imprudence, he had gamed away all his wealth, and was ashamed to make his appearance among us. So, I persuaded

myself he would come back at last, only himself, with nothing in his purse—but his heart—that was the treasure I regarded—his heart to me unchanged. Frank, we are not rich, but we have enough. Oh! if he had come back thus! But now, to offer me his contemptible thousands, and”—

She stopped, and hid her face in her handkerchief. As she did not say more at the moment, I interposed—

“But, my dear sister, the offer of his thousands is not so unhandsome, if it be true, as he says, that he has now nothing else to offer.”

“But why not, Frank? what has changed his mind? Does he speak of any new affection? Is he married to another?”

“No; he intimates nothing of that kind.”

“Then what is it, Frank? Tell me all:—what is it that keeps him back.”

“I am afraid he is not very well?”

“Not well! oh! let us fly to him!”

“I mean, less as to his bodily health, than as to his mind.”

“For Heaven’s sake, Frank, let me know the worst. Why do you keep the letter from my hand?”

“There are parts which I think not quite proper for your knowledge. But if you insist, there it is.”

I watched her while she read it. Some of the passages evidently disturbed her excessively; others seemed to perplex her without being clear enough for any other effect. Her countenance continually changed its expression, and I wondered what would be the upshot. After she had read it in parts, and in

the whole, several times, she laid the letter down, and, in a tone of tenderness not to be mistaken, exclaimed, "Poor Harry!" and burst into one of those floods of tears by which she was accustomed to relieve her heart, when her feelings were too strong for any other mode of expression. The burthen in this case was much heavier than in any former one, and the fit lasted proportionably. We separated at length for the day, with grief on my part, almost as great as her own, that her constancy could not be shaken. I saw plainly that if he returned as he promised, and she desired, and he did not object to a meeting, I should be obliged to consent. What would be the effect of their meeting, I could not foresee; but in looking forward to it, I could not help feeling an undefinable anxiety and dread. About a week or ten days intervened, when a letter came direct from Harold dated from London, stating that he was residing in — Street, and ready to receive me whenever I chose to visit him. Before I went, I thought it necessary to speak seriously to my sister. I pointed out to her how happy our present circumstances and expectations would be, if she were clear of this unfortunate attachment; that every one desired she should be clear of it, including him who was its object; and that if this desirable preliminary were secured, there was, as she well knew, a heart of purity, of truth, of constancy, ready for her acceptance, and fully deserving that place in her affections, which another had so long occupied, only, as it should seem, to overwhelm us with distress.

"I understand you, Frank, nor will I dissemble

that if past circumstances had been other than they were, my affections might have been differently, and as warmly, and—looking to events as they have turned out—more worthily engaged. But I cannot change the past, nor its effect upon my heart. Suppose, dear Frank, that at this moment there were no living bar to what you would urge me to,—even then I could not—at present at least, if ever—agree to what I understand to be your wish. To only one man can I give a virgin heart with a virgin hand; and he for whom you plead is deserving of both. But, Frank, the bar between me and Charles is still living—is unfortunate—” (here her eyes suffused with tears, and all that followed was spoken in sobs)—“ I suppose he has deeply sinned—but there is joy in heaven over a sinner that repenteth, and I might be the humble instrument of — or else he has partly lost his mind; for I do not understand his otherwise mysterious words:—in any case, I see, Frank, that a closer union than that of misfortune is impossible between us: but can I take a step in any direction that leads me quite away from him?—Can I even stand still, and see him perishing in soul, or body, or both? Only suppose me married as you would wish me, and that I knew this erring man to be dragging on a miserable existence without me—could I be a happy—nay, in mind, a blameless wife? Oh! Frank, you know not what ties—time, and memory, and pondered affection, have fixed between this man and me!”

And here, her emotion stopped her. “ Then you really wish, dear Sophy, if I find Harry not dis-

inclined to see you, that I should signify no unwillingness on your part to see him?"

"Can I wish you, Frank, to signify other than the truth?"

I could say nothing further; and, with sad and anxious feelings on both sides, our conversation ended.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INTELLECT INFORMED AND SHARPENED—THE
SOUL LOST.

A WRITTEN answer to Harold's invitation would scarcely have arrived before myself:—indeed, I preferred taking him unapprised of the exact time of my calling. It was eleven o'clock on the fourth of December, when I knocked, with no little agitation of mind, at the house indicated. The door was opened by a foreign servant, who told me, in French, that his master was asleep; but on giving my name, I was earnestly pressed to await his waking, and immediately attended by another person, whom I recognised as an acquaintance of my boyish days, when I used to come up occasionally with Harry to the mercantile house in London. He was at that time a confidential clerk in the counting-house, was often at the dinner table as a kind of subordinate guest, and had made himself a favourite with both of us. I soon learned from him, that having had occasion to pass between the firm and Harold on the occasion of the latter's coming into his property, he had been induced, by the solicitation of one party, and the concurrence of the other, to trans-

fer his services, and had, in fact, from that period, been Harold's major-domo. With this man, I was glad of an opportunity to talk a little, in order, before I met Harold face to face, that I might learn something more than I yet knew of his condition. The man seemed not unwilling to be communicative, though, as our conversation proceeded, I could not help perceiving that he spoke with some reserve ; and when I told him so, he justified himself by pleading fidelity to a Principal (so he always called Harold) who was worthy of all respect, in spite of anything which might be placed on the per-contra side of his honourable, upright conduct. This prepared me to expect that some of his answers to my queries would be ambiguous or evasive ; and I found them so. I first asked him, whether he considered Mr. Fremdling to be in any degree insane. He answered that if I referred to his intellect, he had no hesitation in saying that the intellectual faculty or faculties,—he did not pretend to speak with the accuracy of a metaphysician (the man had evidently been trying to form a style on that of his *Principal*)—that these faculties were remarkably sound and clear. Not satisfied with this answer, I then asked, if nothing was lost in him of that which we look for in a beloved and loving friend,—nothing of heartiness and warmth of feeling, the pledges not only of a sound intellect, but of a force of soul ready to carry the perceptions of the intellect into action. He took a minute or two before he answered this question, and then said : “ You will find your friend suddenly grown an old man, not in person only, but in mind. In his person, you will be

astonished at the change—the change of all you remember, except identity of features, in the handsome, lively young man of two years ago :—you need not wonder, then, if you should find a correspondent change in his *mind*—I believe I ought to say *soul* or *heart*—you will pardon me for not being able to use exact words on such subjects. What I mean to say, is this—that what he has lost in warmth of heart, he has gained in clearness of understanding.” The answer still eluded the point I had in view : “Is he,” I next said, “is he always master of himself?” The answer was, “Whenever you see him, depend upon it you will be sure to find him perfect master of himself.” I was still unsatisfied :—the answer left me to suppose there were times when he was not what I should find him to be. I was about to inquire further, when the French valet came with an apology for my having been kept waiting, and a request that I would follow him. We had to pass through three rooms to a fourth, during which short distance, I felt all my old associations revive. I was about to meet the close companion of my infancy, my boyhood, my early manhood, whom I had not only loved, but regarded as my natural superior, and consequently my pattern,—the betrothed of a beloved sister, and, but for some delinquencies pardonable in the world’s eye, and which, if they existed, were as yet unexplained, and at least undefended,—was, in talent, and in *purposed* goodness, worthy of my sister :—this man, my equal in age with only some weeks’ difference, and that difference making me the elder, I felt myself ready to take by the hand with all these thoughts upon me,

when, the door of the room being opened, myself ushered in, and the servant having retired, I found myself in the presence of a figure so different,—I was prepared for some difference,—but so awfully different from the one I expected to see, that I stood petrified. “Is this,” thought I, “is this the friend of my early days, this gray-headed and gray-bearded anatomy, that appears to have lived through years of dire experience, and to have gained his knowledge, if knowledge he has, at the expense of all we love and value in the ignorance and innocence of youth?” While this thought was passing through my mind, which, however, did not prevent my recognising the features of my early companion, he stood, like myself, motionless and speechless; till, like a piece of clock-work that acts when the machinery prompts, he said, in perfectly unimpassioned tones, “You see that what I have prepared you to expect is true: two years have taken more from me than twice thirty take from ordinary men, leaving to me only what in man is bestial. My youth is blasted, though the functions which fail to men in ordinary old age, are, in the gaunt, iron, grizzled frame before you, strong as ever for the purposes of mere animal existence, and of passionless thought. How this calamity has come upon me, you shall know hereafter. In the mean time, let it be your care, as it shall be mine, to detach you and yours from a being whose life must henceforth be alone. It is a life moreover that will not last many months, however strong the appetites that now feed it; and there is therefore the greater necessity not to delay the steps for securing to you all I possess, after my death, ex-

cepting some slight deductions in the way of payment to those who now administer to my needs. Sit down."

We then took seats, and at least five minutes' silence ensued. Overcome as I was, I had not spoken at all ; and I now fixed my eyes upon him as he sat motionless with his eyes also turned to mine, but with such vacancy of outward expression, that they had no more effect upon my gaze, than the rest of his passionless features. He had evidently said all he intended to say in this first address to me ; and as it seemed to have cost him some trouble, he retired for repose to his habitual abstraction, and left me to reply when and how I chose. What I did say when at length I got utterance, I can scarcely remember. I expressed, as well as I could, my astonishment and my regret ; and finally my lively hope that, since his frame was sound, all else might be recovered. I hinted at self-delusion, which able medical and other advice might assist him to combat ; and I related to him what I considered to be the similar case of Simon Brown, which I placed before my reader in the previous chapter. To my detail of this case, he listened without the least indication of assent or dissent ; but when I had ceased to speak, met my statement by a pithy unimpassioned reply, his lips moving as if by clock-work, and his mind giving out its matter not at all through his eyes, but only through his mouth, his eyes still keeping the deadness I have mentioned. Now it is remarkable that though of his first address to me, I can remember almost the exact words, yet I cannot call up, with any degree of certainty, the expressions by which he subsequently conveyed anything he said :—

I persuade myself nevertheless that I collected his meaning. The reason of this I believe to be, that I was forced to meditate on all he said, in order to collect his full purpose ; and having, in this way, made his meaning as it were my own, I was not able to restate it except in my own way, namely, with the usual aids of illustration derived from feeling and fancy,—aids of which his style, in our conversations during the fortnight I at this time spent in London, was entirely devoid. It is true, I had subsequently the advantage of recapitulation from his lips, which placed the same matter before me in a style of a very different kind from that which he at present used ; and I believe my own style in what follows, owes whatever force it has to the fact I have just stated. But what I wish my reader clearly to understand, in perusing the account I have to give of my friend's metaphysical views, is this,—that I do not state them as at this period I received them from his mouth : I state them according to my own apprehension of them, in language which can give no idea of the passionless unimagined sentences that issued from his mouth, producing an impression of automatic effect, like that we experience in witnessing a silk or a cotton loom continuously giving forth new portions of its fabric.

In reply, then, to my suggestion that his disease was a species of insanity which good advice might cure, I understood him to say that from ordinary insanity he was perfectly free. He denied that his case resembled that of Simon Brown, whose monomania arose out of the usual cause, an overwrought imagination on one particular exciting subject. His

own defect, he averred, was an *extinct*, an *exhausted* imagination. He did not, and could not deceive himself on any one common subject. He saw the world, not as hope and fancy paint it, but as it is, poor, naked, bare—with no gratifications, now that he had ceased to be deluded by fancy, except those which we have in common with the brutes. He declared that there was nothing left in him of the active principle, whatever it be, that keeps in motion the higher elements of our human nature—that gives a colouring to this scene of things, and raises joy, and grief, and hope, and fear :—he had spent it all ; he had allowed the current to flow with an impetuosity unexampled in men of ordinary constitution, had allowed it to be mingled with, and be absorbed, and corrupted by, the current of the appetites, till at length the source of the former current became dry, and nothing remained to him but the intellect and the appetites. He was in the state which heathen philosophy considered the summit of wisdom. But what wisdom is there in opening the eyes to the walls and roofs of a comfortless prison, when, while they were shut, we were as in a garden, with the sky shining above, and flowers beneath the feet ? His insanity, he said, was the absence of that, which, in its abuse or excess, is the insanity—but, in its regulated state, is the destined happiness—of our race in this scene of things. We require imagination ; for, without it, the passions which urge us to action would never be moved, or would, as in him, become stagnant ; and we are made liable to passions, because by improving and directing them, we adapt our nature to a higher state of

being. This we do, when we select present objects, not as an ultimate end, but as a means of keeping the passions in healthy exercise ; and if we gild these objects with celestial hue, let them be so chosen as to leave us able to transfer our affections, by faith, to higher things, and the happiness secured will not be a hindrance, but an introduction to the purer happiness reserved. All this, my poor friend declared that he could see clearly, but he saw it as one who looks on a lost treasure which he has no strength or means to recover. He had intellect, but nothing that his intellect could rule : it was active, and there was pleasure yielded by its mere activity ; but beyond this pleasure, it was active to no end. While it placed before him the speculative probability of a higher state of being, it stopped far short of *faith*. Unless his soul were restored to him, all that his intellect could do, was to tell him that he must remain a man of earth, to drop again into earth when his brain should cease to work, with no hope that the seed so sown would spring up at all,—still less that it would spring up a more glorious thing than it was before. He appeared not to have forgotten his theology ; for he further explained his actual condition by saying that God had given him over to himself ; that he was no longer in a state of grace, but in that which theologians call the natural man ; his appetites and what remains of imagination,—imagination entirely subservient to the appetites,—being so far below the higher standard which his intellect approved, as to leave him nothing better than a conscious brute, while, by the curse upon him,

he was precluded the means of gaining a higher state.

Such was the purport of my friend's reply. It is true that I understood him darkly at the time, from the fact I have stated, that his cold unadorned language rendered a long meditation necessary to reach his full meaning: but perhaps the very obscurity which puzzled me at the time, also, at the time, heightened the general effect to my imagination. I must, indeed, confess that my regret, my pity, nay, my reverence, all increased as this singular colloquy proceeded. I could not help persuading myself, that, young as he was, a restoration to healthy existence was possible; and when it was my turn to speak, dwelt upon the circumstances of our early friendship with so much warmth, that my earnestness betrayed me into tears. Of my sister, by name or direct reference, I said nothing; for he had not spoken of her: but I felt that something must be said allusively, in order to fulfil what she expected of me. I thought that he, moved by my earnestness, would lead me to the subject. But his impenetrable ice remained, and with it his silence on that point, so important to me and mine. When he next spoke, he reverted to the dispositions he had made of his property: he told me his Will was drawn up, and he wished me to read it, and suggest any alterations I desired previously to the signing and witnessing. I answered, that I did not wish to be consulted on the subject; that I hoped he might live as long at least as myself to enjoy the wealth that was his own; and that there was one to be considered to whom his wealth was nothing, and

whose broken hopes it would not compensate ; that a twelvemonth ago, all but a few days, we were expecting him a very different being to what he now appeared ; but that the love which then awaited him, was not love which adverse circumstances could change, if these circumstances involved no premeditated guilt ; and, finally, that the eighteenth of December, his twenty-second birth-day, being at hand,—might there not be a meeting which should bring about a better state of *his* mind, while it would give joy to another's, greater than it was in my power to describe ?

I watched his face while I suggested this arrangement, and I kept watching him when I had finished speaking ; for he did not answer. In a moment or two his countenance changed ; the blood mounted to his cadaverous cheek, and his passionless eye by degrees lighted up, and twinkled ; but it was with a fire that certainly came not from the skies :—the statue-like form was gone, and a satyr stood in its place. The change, without being decisively intelligible, filled me with inexpressible revulsion. He, in his turn, being awakened from his abstraction, seemed to remark my aversion ; and, as if to escape from it, rose hastily, and ran out of the room. The whole was as the vision of a moment. I waited in a state of strange suspense, till King, the major-domo already mentioned, came to apologize for his *Principal*, with the plea of sudden indisposition, which would defer the continuance of our conversation till another morning.

In the absence of the master, I now sought to im-

prove my information by questioning the subordinate, who, I must say, seemed anxious I should entertain a good opinion of all that was going on under his deputed management. He told me that a table would be spread for me at whatever time I pleased, but that Mr. Fremdling always fed alone ; and that though a bed was not provided for me in the house, yet that neighbouring apartments had been taken, which were quite at my service, and he hoped would be comfortable. All this seemed so strange that I asked for explanation. "The fact is," said King, "that Mr. Fremdling has no regular dinner hour. He eats, I suppose, on a philosophical principle, that is, when the fit comes on him ; and when he does eat, it certainly is to some purpose. He orders his food while he knows what will be best for him, and desires me, at the same time, never to let him take more than will do him good."

"What, then, he is not always master of himself?"

"Well, in a certain sense, perhaps not quite. But I have only to cause the dishes, plates, decanters,—in short the whole table at once,—to be removed, and desire his hookah to be brought, and he is quickly soothed. He smokes while lying in a loose dress on his couch, and soon falls into so sound a sleep, that you would be apt to think it his last. I believe he never dreams, though I have heard him say he used to be a great dreamer. This is the only way in which he takes his sleep : he never goes to bed, nor undresses except for his daily bath."

"Then of course he has no bed-fellow?"

"Oh no ! he has no *sleeping* partner," said the

quondam counting-house clerk, glad to elude my question by stating a literal truth.

“ This is certainly a strange way of living :—is it indispensable to him in his present state ? ”

“ I am sure it is : at least he thinks so himself, and no one so accurately knows himself and his needs as your highly-gifted friend. The waste upon his nature, which is caused by his peculiar power of abstract thought, without a single passion or sentiment to warm the blood, to quicken its passage through the frame, and keep up the energies of life, demands the supply of food in a more than ordinary degree to save him from total inanition.”

“ And is this all the stimulant he finds necessary ? ”

To this question King did not immediately answer. I could not help musing for a while, and repeating some lines from a modern poet, which I had learned as a school-boy :

“ His is the mind with wintry reason blessed,
The dull lethargic sovereign of the breast ;
His is the life that creeps in dead repose,
No joy that sparkles, and no tear that flows.”

At this moment, the sound of a laughing female voice or voices caught my ear, and drew my inquiring eyes upon King ; who ran out of the room, saying he supposed it must be some of the women-servants. The voice soon stopped, and he returned.

“ Are your housemaids,” said I, “ accustomed to be about this part of the house so late in the day ? ”

“ We are all servants,” he replied, “ that live in this house, all of us under a just master, who never allows the smallest value received to remain unpaid

for. What you want to know of him, Mr. Frank, more than I tell, you must get from himself. You will have time during the fortnight ; for I understand it is arranged that you proceed with him into the country to meet Miss Drake on the eighteenth, to which day it wants just the time I mention. All I can further say of my Principal, is, that he has been no one's enemy but his own."

" You do not mean to say he has no deep vices ?"

" I certainly do mean to say so :—he has no vices that the world does not allow. He never was a seducer of innocence ; and he has too much principle to intrigue, though I well know that many married women have attempted to lure him."

I replied that if punishment of a peculiar and strange kind argued the existence of previous sin, I could not but believe him guilty. Since Nebuchadnezzar was turned from the dwellings of men to live with beasts, I could not think of any infliction of a like kind that came up to it in degree.

Alas ! in saying this, I was not at the time aware how literal was the truth. The full extent of Harold's affliction was kept back from me. I met him in his metaphysic state,—a state all intellect, all MIND : I perceived that he was no longer capable of his æsthetic state—that state in which I had so often seen him in the buoyant years of his spring and early summer,—the state in which he had been all SOUL :—but a state remained that was kept back from my distinct cognizance ; a state when, from the deadness of metaphysic abstraction, he started into full life :—this full life I was not allowed then to witness, or to

know how entirely it was mere ANIMAL LIFE, devoid of soul, and incapable of all enjoyment and all restraint which belong to the soul.

Still, what I had seen, and what had been unwillingly and obscurely told, furnished quite enough to make me ponder, whether I should be justified in suffering Harold to come into the presence of my sister. "Do you think," said I, "there is any the least hope of his being recovered to a better state of being?"

King excused himself from answering so momentous a question; "but," he added,—“this I can say, that Mr. Fremdling has often declared your sister to have been appointed his good angel, till a bad one fell in his way, to whom he sold his soul. He still entertains a presentiment that your sister will save him.”

"Nay," said I, "this way of thinking and speaking indicates decided insanity."

"You will not say so," replied King, "when you learn from himself the ground of these opinions. You know not the extraordinary woman, through whom it is that you find him thus blasted."

My curiosity was excited; and as King seemed willing to satisfy it, I asked him to narrate all the facts he knew, from the time he first joined my friend as his near and most intimate attendant, up to the present moment."

"I first," said King, "recommenced my acquaintance with Mr. Fremdling, when he was on the eve of his majority, just a twelvemonth ago. He had been passing from one Italian city to another, and had left behind, at every place, the most unequivocal marks of admiration. The gay, handsome, accomplished

young Englishman (he always passed for one) was the talk of all people ; and it has been said to me, that to look into his countenance, or catch a glance of his quick eye, was to feel devoted to him. His pleasures were as various as the hours of the day ; for whatever was going on of amusement in those places where amusement is business, found in him a ready supporter and participator. Nor, as far as I could learn, were his pleasures, up to a certain time, such as even you could have censured : at least I am sure of this, that he withdrew himself from all lures that would have compromised his integrity. Perhaps you may have heard that he gambled. This, like other reports, had scarcely any foundation to rest on. He was indeed often at houses where gaming on a large scale was going on ; but though he was a marked prey, and he did not quite hold back when certain persons were the players, yet his luck and skill were such that he won large sums, so that the professed gamblers gave him up. With others, he never played for large stakes, nor, when he could escape from play, did he join in it at all. I am now speaking," King went on to say, " only of what I heard before I joined him. When my services began, the *liaison* had commenced, which, in a short time after, began to produce the change in him we so much deplore. The first time he saw this female was at mass. I dare say you are aware of his impartial feeling in favour of any form of Christian devotion, provided it be sincere. He has, I believe, strong convictions that make him prefer one division of Christian doctrine and worship to others, but to all persecution in favour of his own persuasion,

and of course in favour of any other persuasion, he is a decided enemy. The fact is, Mr. Frank, that by nature he is a perfectly generous man. I do not call him generous now : all his warmth of feeling is gone ; but *just* he still is ; and when he speaks of the woman who collected all that warmth for herself, and then froze him into indifference for everything except herself, rejecting him at last as a thing she had purposely rendered thus worthless,—when he calls this woman a *devil*, he utters a sober truth, and not a madman's exaggeration. I was telling you that he saw her first at mass. She had seen him, I doubt not, long before : he was too handsome a man to have been a month in the place, and not have attracted her notice. You have heard of this woman's origin :—she was the daughter of a man who had amassed much money in England by nefarious means ; had taken refuge from the law by escaping to Italy, where he increased his gains ; had lived with an Italian female of principles lax as his own ; and, by her, had this child, whom the parents had worldly wisdom enough to train up in all accomplishments likely to make her attractive in her maturity. If I were to speak of her natural abilities as I have heard them spoken of, I should say that she had not a parallel except in your friend. As to her person, it was luxuriant and voluptuous, far beyond my powers of description. I will not state to you what I have lately heard of her previous *amours*, nor of the deadly crimes that were said to have accompanied some of them :—at the time I am speaking of, she had contrived to re-establish her reputation, living, as she did,

in society and in a place where intensity of regard to the ceremonials of religion is apt to be taken for religion itself. You know better than I do what your friend's opinion used to be on the subject of religious devotion:—in whomsoever it appeared, it seemed to him, in so far as it was pure, the summit of good feeling and of right thinking. The woman I am speaking of seemed to know the exact lure that would meet his prevalent temper of mind; and cautiously concealed the sensual bait under a cover of holiness and purity. I am still speaking from hearsay only. Yet I joined my Principal soon enough to know that his purpose of returning to be present with you on completing his majority, and to fulfil his existing engagements, was always uppermost in his heart, and that he failed, not through premeditated infidelity, but through the force of a temptation too subtle and too strong to allow of his escape. How this temptation acted at the time, and beset him afterwards, he will perhaps," said King, "inform you himself. I have nothing further to unfold."

Returning to my own narrative, which has included all that I remember of my first day's visit to Harold, I have to add that I did not choose to take my solitary dinner at his house, but proceeded to the apartments close by, which had been taken for me. Here, the first thing I did was to write to my sister, not such a letter as I now know ought to have been written, but such a one as I thought would set her mind at rest concerning his bodily health; for I was well aware that any intimation of pain or sickness, would bring her immediately to London. To prevent

this, I told her of the arrangement for meeting her on the eighteenth, and that I hoped, in the intervening fortnight, by daily visits to Harry, to get better acquainted with his actual condition, and the probability of recovering him, if not entirely, yet into something like his former self.

The next day was Sunday. I went to Harold's residence, but found I was too early to see him immediately. Having other visits to pay in London, besides attending church service, I left word that I should defer my second visit till the morrow.

On the following day I prepared myself, on revisiting the companion of my youth, for a repetition of the shock I had experienced at first seeing him. But the effect was different. Not only was the change in him less repulsive to me on account of my being prepared for it, but my imagination, excited by the first shock, having been in the mean time at work in exaggerating the bad features of his case, led me now to think him not quite so changed as I had thought him to be. He was indeed only the ruins of his former self, but the ruins were noble :—

“ As when heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oak or mountain pine,
With singed top its stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath.”

His fine features and manly form remained, and the presence of a clear intellect was manifest when he spoke, though no expression beamed from his eyes. But having said this of him, I have said all that could be declared in his favour. On my advancing to him with cordiality in order to take his hand, he raised it

mechanically, and on joining mine to it, I felt from it a cold, clammy, unwilling pressure, that soon congealed my warmth. We took seats, and he was silent as if quickly lost in rêverie; from which I found I could awaken him only by suggesting subjects belonging to his habitual trains of thought. I wished to get from him something more about his Italian tempter and seducer than King had been able to furnish; but he was evidently indisposed to have his thoughts led, at this time, into that desired direction; and I was obliged to try, by common-place inquiries, whether I could awaken in him any thoughts, the communication of which would make me better acquainted with the causes and the nature of his present changed condition. Expressing my regret that his youth should be thus suddenly blasted by age, I asked him whether he experienced the infirmities of age, so as to be unhappy under the infliction. I touched one of the springs of his intellectual mechanism. To bring in review and compare the different states of his own existence, such as they had been, and could have been, and would or might yet be, was his habitual employment. Yet it did not seem to procure any further pleasure than activity of thought; which to him indeed seemed a great pleasure. In answer to my question, he told me he was in no pain; if he were, life would be intolerable to him; under actual circumstances, it was indifferent: he was content to live; he was equally content to die: the activity of his brain during his waking hours was unavoidable: he often joined to it voluntary exercise of body and limbs on horseback or on foot; but while cor-

poreal activity tended to the preservation of such health as he had, the constant unavoidable action of his brain was drying up the sap of existence, and daily adding to the frost of age which had already overtaken him. That part of our human nature which would have kept back this effect till its proper time, was in him dried up and exhausted,—that part which would have upheld the plant till its proper time of decay, nor have left it even then, but remained to quicken it for a new state of being.—I must again inform my reader that the style I am using was not his :—he conveyed to me, in language I can neither remember nor imitate, what I nevertheless persuade myself I fully understood : it was a language destitute of every indication of earnestness or concern ; and when he restated to me what he had said yesterday, that without some change in him, death would be, to him, the casting back of his frame into the general elements of nature, without power of individual revivication,—he said it without despair ; as, on the other hand, when he spoke of a resurrection for others, there was no accompanying warmth of religious thankfulness, or desire, or hope. One pleasure I learned that he had ; it was that of sleep, and the soft slumberous fatigue that precedes it, induced by the labour of the brain, and the added activity of the limbs ; it was, he said, a death-like dreamless sleep, the more acceptable as being the precursor of that eternal sleep, into which his gradually fading existence must very soon inevitably drop.

I wish my reader to be aware, of what indeed I was not completely aware at the time, that the abstraction

of intellect from the sentimental part of our human nature, which, in him, seemed to have become total, was not accompanied by any the least separation of his animal nature. Indeed, according to his philosophy or way of thinking, such separation could not be. You may separate passion from intellect; you may subjugate the appetites to intellect; but the frame must exist, or the intellectual creature cannot exist. When he stated this view, I asked whether intellect is necessary to animal being. He answered that what we call intellect is not necessary, since brute animals are without it, at least in the kind or degree in which it exists in the perfect human animal. But in their several orders, from that which is nearest to man, downwards to merely sentient being, every creature has something to guide itself, which, if not intellect, is, to the creature, something better than intellect; for it guides the animal unerringly to the proper ends of its limited being. Man, and man alone, can fail of reaching the ends for which he was created: yet no failure can be charged upon him till intellect, and the power to elect his course under the direction of intellect, are a part of his consciousness. His first state of existence, from the quickening in the womb to the third or fourth week from the birth, is merely sentient,—the very lowest state of animal existence. Out of this he emerges by degrees, till he is in a condition to arise to the highest state which exists in the visible world. “And he is destined,” said I, “to rise still higher.” “Let it be so said,” he replied, “and we shall presently have to ask, by what means. His first being promises nothing that is

within his own power ; what is at that time given him must be given of free grace. A merely sentient being is one that is now in pain, now without pain, yet unconscious of the one or the other." I told him I could not conceive such a thing to be. "And yet," said he, "though no one can conceive it, we must admit the fact, unless we allow original knowledge to be implanted in man, which is, in other words, *instinct*. But the new-born infant seems to have only one instinct, that which makes him seek and imbibe his proper food. Suppose him then to be in pain, and that he has no instinctive knowledge of a state which is not pain,—when he cries it will indeed be from the force of the pain, but not because he *knows* he is in pain ; he knows nothing yet, which is the same thing as saying he is not conscious." My extraordinary companion then went on to tell me how and when intellectual being begins, and, with it, desire, and hope, and fear, and all the sentimental part of our nature. The remembrance of this beginning is, with regard to the race at large, wrapt in the darkness which envelops infancy ; but Harold had a persuasion that he saw through the darkness that went with his own early existence : he remembered becoming conscious by being for the first time aware that something existed beside himself, and he became aware of the *real* by being, at the same instant, aware of the *ideal*. When, for example, after the sequence of sensations by which it was always preceded, the full bosom of his nurse did not reach his lips, but a disappointment—a phantom in its stead,—then, because the phantom was present, he knew the reality was absent, and the mere

instinctive cry became a cry of impatience and anger, till the *desire*—desire now for the first time existing—was appeased. If my long-tried companion was to be believed, it was because he was so constituted as to know more of his states of conscious being than others are qualified to know of theirs, that he grew up from infancy a transcendentalist—that is to say, one who is accustomed to stand above or beyond his proper self, in order to contemplate that very self in its different states; and what had been the partial habit of his early years, had now become the sole occupation of his blasted maturity.

When he paused, I could not help expressing regret at his having been so peculiarly constituted, since to this cause, I thought, must be attributed the melancholy change that had come over him,—over *him*, the kind, buoyant, warm-hearted friend of my youthful days. I spoke with emotion, but it raised no emotion in return. He replied, in his usual icy manner, that he took entirely to himself the demerit of the change,—a change not the necessary effect of original constitution, but of a failure to do the best that could be done with its inherent powers. He could have subjected the animal to the moral nature,—the brute to the instructed man,—the mere appetites to the passions which pursue a high, and, as regards this world, an unattainable good, but which, in the pursuit itself, secures the greatest happiness we can here attain. If, in him (so my friend continued) the appetites were strong, so also was the intellect clear, and the passions which sought the beautiful and the sublime, the true, the good, and the holy,—were

remarkably powerful: but instead of subjecting, as intellect directed, the appetites to these noble aspirations, he permitted these to fall into alliance with the appetites,—to become their ministers and incentives; and, yielding to a tempter as Adam had yielded,—a tempter peculiarly fitted, first to mislead, and then to betray him, he discovered, when too late that the misalliance of the noble energies with the base, had dissipated the former for ever, and left the latter transparent, in all their naked, native meanness. Thus was he floating on the sluggish stream of mere animal existence, with intellect indeed, and intellect not only unimpaired but sharpened: yet what did it make him know?—what but that the gratification of his appetites was the only pleasure, the only end of his degraded being, and that in directing these, he could attain the philosophic virtues, but none other.—At this point, I could not help asking him whether he was able to lay claim even to these; I might give him credit for two of them, but as to Prudence and Temperance, they seemed to be beyond his reach. There may be times, he told me in reply, when he was less master of himself than at others; but for those times he made provision:—“and what is prudence,” said he, “but the use of timely precaution? what is temperance, but setting bounds to appetite that it may fulfil its end and go no further?”

Such is the sum of what I collected from Harold at my second visit. I left him; and in the solitary walk which I took before returning to my lodgings, I gave way to a *rêverie* almost as absorbing as that which I had witnessed. What was I to think of this man, so

peculiarly visited, so self-knowing, self-accusing, self-collected? Is he not, with so many remaining virtues, and free from the stain of any deep crime,—still young in years, and, however strangely his youth is blasted, still in apparent bodily strength,—is he not recoverable into moral health and proper human feeling? I ended my mental queries in the usual way, by resolving that what I wished to be, would be; and, reaching my temporary abode, found a letter from my sister, full of hopes even more sanguine than my own, and desiring me to give, during the days that intervened before the eighteenth, every account I could furnish of Harry that might make her better acquainted with his condition as he then was. Ah! if I could have done this with perfect knowledge of the truth! But how, even if I could, was it possible to make her understand the truth? The difference which now separated Harold from herself, was such as to be inconceivable by a soul trained to purity as hers had been. Let me, then, not look back on a state of things, which, even if I had understood them, I could not have changed, but pursue the web of unavoidable events till I have unravelled it.

Yet I must still delay my story. For Harold, during several days on which I continued to visit him, maintained silence about what I chiefly wished to hear, and replied only to such questions as drew from him a farther development of his metaphysical views. Of these, it is with me an affair of conscience to give the best account I can. A man so unusually constituted as he was may have had power, beyond other men, to see into the elements of our common nature,

to examine the manner of their union, and to know their separate, as well as their blended effect. That he looked to me to make some publication of his views, I have the best ground to know, and he took some pains to qualify me for the task, not only by the conversations which occurred on this first occasion of visiting him in London, but in those of a subsequent visit, which served to make clearer to me what was at present communicated. I crave my reader's patience, then, for a summary statement of the views which my friend unfolded, at the six or seven days' visits that followed the two already noticed.

First, then, I have to state that his views concerning almost all that passes under the name of *metaphysics*, *transcendentalism*, or *speculative philosophy*, led him to place it, as Milton places it, among the studies fit for devils, and to denounce it, in the words of the poet, as

“Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy.”

Leading us astray from what we *can* know, it proposes to unfold what we *cannot* know:—by juggling with words which conceal our ignorance of things, it begets an opinion of knowledge on subjects quite beyond the reach of our faculties during our present state of existence. That such mistaken path to science should have been followed when even physical philosophy used to build on assumptions incapable of experimental proof, cannot excite surprise. But physical philosophy is now grown wise enough to reject all hypothesis which lies beyond the possibility of such proof:—why, then, should metaphysical philosophy

be permitted to begin her systems, as she almost always does begin, with assumptions, which, if the proof come at all, can come only in a sphere of existence in which other powers shall be given than we now possess. In the days of ancient Greece, the philosopher of every school had, as we know, his favourite maxim, which was to explain all the phenomena of the universe. Thus, with one of them the maxim was, that *man is the measure of all things*; a maxim which, if not adopted in words by others, lies at the bottom of their systems also. Now, it is true that so far as we can reach knowledge in this scene of things, man is the measure of the things which he knows; for while his knowledge consists, as indeed it does consist, in nothing else than in being aware of the relations of those things to each other, it is always with regard to himself as now existing among, and being concerned with them:—what they are, or, in other words, what relations they bear to a being or beings higher than himself, he cannot know. Yet the maxim takes for granted that he *can* know; for it asserts him to be the measure of *all* things, and so, not of the things of sense alone, and the facts of conscious existence, but of existence beyond these,—of the Supreme, and of beings that continue the chain of things from man upward to the Supreme. Thus presuming that we *can* know what God is—*can* know his nature and the manner of his existence—the metaphysician proceeds, nothing doubting, to place Him before us, not as an object of rational *belief*, but a subject of science. As in that condition of our race which is but just above the brute, man carves a block

into some fantastic shape more or less resembling his own, and calls it a god ;—as, in that condition which succeeds, when the beauty of external nature has warmed his soul, has filled it with poetical imagery, and connected that imagery with his passions, he personifies those passions, and out of them makes for himself gods ;—so, in an intellectual condition like our own, and among a people prone to idealism like the Germans, the philosopher, not content to infer the existence of a supreme intelligence from *inductive* evidence—from the testimony of things adapted to apparent ends, and to *believe* in such a being, sets up an abstraction of his thinking self for a god, investing it with abstractions of qualities also derived from himself, declaring these to be *infinite*, *absolute*, and the like, as if these words were the signs of something known to him,—as if the former could be verified by anything more than the *unended*, and the latter by anything more than what is *loose* from all dependence that *he* can trace. From the abstraction thus set up and thus invested, the German transcendentalist deduces the whole of the universe real and ideal, represents that universe to be but a development of his self-educated deity, and, in short, reduces all things to that single self, that *ego*, from which the development began, and to which it returns.

In rejecting all metaphysics having the character, which, following my friend's guidance, I here attempt to indicate, I am to observe that he did not exclude from transcendental surview the domains that lie beyond our present sphere ; for it is necessary to know that there are such domains, in order to spare

the useless labour of attempting to penetrate them. What exists in those domains, may be the subject of rational *belief*,—of belief which includes the conviction that it cannot now be known; and to this degree and kind of assent, religion may add the force of faith. But without any aid from revelation, and yielding assent on rational grounds alone, the candid inquirer cannot but receive a lively belief in a supreme intelligence from the evidence of it which the world he lives in affords:—he may do more; he may advance from such belief to the persuasion of laws of conduct by which the favour of that Being is to be won, as harmonizing with the apparent course of his providence. Neither from legitimate transcendental surview, did my friend deem it right to exclude the systems which are embraced as special revelations of the Supreme. It is by virtue only of such surview that we can be empowered to say, whether one more than another comes recommended by marks of truth, and fairly offers itself to universal acceptance. On this point my friend made me think that his present condition, however deplorable for himself, fitted him the better to be a guide to others. If, in him, faith had ceased to be an operative principle, he could, with the more clearness and impartiality, speculate on its value to those, who had not, like him, lost the affections on which faith is fitted to operate. And to his speculative view, its value appeared to be this,—that it draws us upward from mere animal being, till our highest delights are those of the purified soul—till we find in our moral affections, our chastened sentiments of love and aversion, of hope and

fear, of joy and grief, the highest happiness we are here capable of, and feel, at the same time, an aspiration after happiness still higher, which faith assures us we shall attain, by perseverance in the work we have begun.—But what is the faith that has, or can have these effects? Is it such faith as natural religion can supply? Grant, if we may grant so much, that the voice of nature has power to reach the understanding of *some* men, with a clearness that might render other teaching superfluous;—such, if possible cases at all, would be but individual cases: what is required for the great generality of our species, is, the direct revelation of an almighty Parent, along with a code of laws to restrain the downward, and encourage the upward tendencies of our being. Does such a revelation exist? The answer of the more advanced portion of our species is, that if it exist at all, it exists in the Bible; and by this advanced portion the Bible is accordingly received as the divine interpreter of natural religion. These are facts which the transcendental observer cannot but recognise; and in carrying his observations further, he must see, that as lapsed human nature can regain a higher state only by gradual progress, so is religion progressive also. The division of the Christian Bible into two parts, the old and the new dispensation, evidences this intended progression up to the time of the Saviour. Through the Saviour we have a doctrine of morality, so pure, so perfect, so opposed to the ordinary motives of human conduct, that, as a race, we can hope for nothing more than a gradual approximation to the high standard it holds out to us. And who will deny

that the approximation has not been, and is still, going on?—that even the ancient people, the treasurers of the First Testament, who, spread among the nations of the world, attest their rejection of the New, and thus furnish an indirect and involuntary evidence of its authenticity,—who will deny that even they are participators in its moral effects, however they hold back their faith from Him, the bringer of those effects—from Him the long-destined Saviour of Jew and of gentile? In the mean time, is it not apparent to the transcendental observer, that in doctrine, as well as in practice, Christianity is far short of its inherent perfection? Would there otherwise be so many sects in doctrine? Ask a well-informed Christian of whatever denomination, whether there is error of doctrine out of his own communion, and he will give you a fair answer, because, as regards all sects but his own, it is derived from a transcendental survey. Ask thus of every sect, avoiding as before, to inquire concerning its own doctrine. When the answers are collected, what will be the result—That there is error everywhere; that Christianity has much, in the shape of doctrine, of dross remaining, of dross which, in every age, has debased her pure gold; and of this dross it may be fairly presumed, that the metaphysical subtilties engendered by the verbal trifling prevalent in the schools of the dark and middle ages, joined to the dogmatism of general councils, form no inconsiderable part.

Thus far, while my friend, on successive days, opened, in clear unimpassioned language, the views which I here record but darkly in my own, I

went with him, if not always quite side by side in opinion, yet, while he dwelt only in generalities, never with any strong revulsion. But when he came to speak particularly of what must be swept away or changed in doctrine, before metaphysics can become a useful part of learning, I must confess I frequently startled and held back. I could admit that empty abstractions,—abstractions that exist in language, but have no existence elsewhere that we can prove, and no applicability to the things we have to deal with ; abstractions generated by the pliability of language, and therefore found in more abundance among the ancient Greeks and modern Germans than among other people,—I could allow that these ought not to be used as the ground of science. But when among such abstractions he placed the time-honoured words MATTER and MIND, affirming them to be words only, useful, convenient, nay, indispensable for the common ends of language, but quite illusory for any higher purpose, I could not help a feeling of dissent ; a feeling which his subsequent declaration did not quite overcome, that while it left the Bible doctrine of man's immortality wholly untouched, it did away with Platonism and the elder Pantheism opposed to it,—with Spiritualism and Materialism,—with Idealism and Sensationalism,—the discussions involving which, have been carried on for ages, and are still continued, with no likelihood of termination on one side or on the other. Again, when in order to illustrate his general condemnation of scholastic learning applied to the rhetorical language of the Bible, he instanced, as mere instruments of verbal trifling, many terms of

solemn and serious association, I must confess I felt as if the foundations of my religious belief were attempted to be undermined. But if I was repugnant to join with my philosophical friend on these points, there was another which grated against one of my strongest prepossessions. I had taken considerable pains to read myself up in logic as the art is taught by some of the latest professors; and in particular had sought instruction in a treatise, the work of an Oxford divine, now a prelate, which, replete as it is with evidence of strong good sense, candour, and learning, could not, I thought, mislead me on a fundamental point. This work had taught me to rise superior to the prejudice which had induced Locke, and some Scottish metaphysicians of later time, to speak of the Aristotelian syllogism with contempt; had made me think these modern theorists to be quite mistaken as to its true character and use; had shown that it was never meant to supersede the ordinary use of language in argumentation, but to be the test for trying its correctness: that the syllogism it furnishes is, in point of fact, the universal principle of reasoning, fulfilling its purpose not by showing whether fair premises are laid down, but whether the conclusion fairly follows from the premises. Having, from these statements, made up my mind concerning the Aristotelian syllogism, whose true value and character they seemed to have re-established, I must confess I listened to my companion with astonishment when he declared—(I cannot recollect his words, which, as usual, were calm and unimpassioned)—when he declared, in language whose force I cannot

reconvey without using homely and inelegant terms, —that the Aristotelian doctrine of the syllogism, or explaining what an act of reasoning is by extremes and middle term, carried into the formal or artificial syllogism, is the most splendid piece of humbug ever perpetrated on the understandings of mankind, — the more splendid inasmuch as it still deludes such men as the writer above referred to. This opinion my friend attempted to justify, by asserting that the intellectual act which is the step taken at every advance in a process of reasoning, is an act as little fitted for analysis or explanation, as an act of sensation ; that every such act does indeed involve three things, namely, the thing known, the thing that, by contradistinction, makes it known, and the new understood relation or knowledge itself ; which three things are premises and conclusion ; but not the premises and conclusion of Aristotle's syllogism ; for these being built on the doctrine of genera and species — artificial heads under which men arrange their knowledge, not acquire it,—are themselves artificial, and if used *with* the natural syllogism, are a superfluous addition to it,—if not so used, they are a machinery to effect that, which nature enables us to effect without machinery ; with this advantage in favour of the natural operation, that from the actual premises, we cannot receive, and in stating them adequately, we cannot communicate, a wrong conclusion ; but from the artificial operation we may, because the machinery may be wrongly worked. While, therefore, it is fully admitted that the rules for rightly working the machinery are demonstrative, yet is the whole of its

doctrine mischievous, because it leads men to the connection between the premises and the conclusion as the place where error in reasoning is liable to exist, instead of directing their sole attention to the truth or falsehood of their premises. In other words, the syllogism of Aristotle holds up an artificial light where no light is needed ; where, if other than useless, it must be mischievous ; while it draws off attention from the parts where, if we allow the conclusions to take place naturally, the errors, whenever there is error, can alone have existence.

As well as I could, I expressed my dissatisfaction at these views. If we could not draw wrong conclusions except from wrong premises, unless we used, and then wrongly used, some instrumental means of reasoning, such as Aristotle's syllogism supplies, I did not see how the world at large, that, according to him, did not incur the danger by using the instrument, could come into possession of so much false premise, as alone remained to account for the immense amount of error that existed in the world. To this objection, he replied with his usual intense coldness of style and delivery ; but to the following purpose :—

All wrong premises are assumptions, and, with a very little previous experience to supply the matter, assumptions are easily made : they are hypotheses, — suppositions, — put forward to explain what we do not yet know by what we know. What we do know, is what we have experimented—experienced ; and, excepting what may not yet be found out to be included in it, is our only knowledge properly so

called ; that is to say, things so known are the only things certain ; things doubtful, or that ought to be considered doubtful, are not in our knowledge. But at every step in life we have to deal with things untried and therefore unknown : these we interpret as well as we can by the things already known ; and we interpret with less and less danger of error, in proportion as we learn, still from experience, to distinguish new things, and new circumstances of things, from old. Thus, as experience increases, erroneous assumptions diminish. But let experience increase to whatever degree, the argument from what has been to infer what shall be, ought always to be accompanied by the suspicion that, in order to reach our conclusion, something has been assumed in our premises, without which the conclusion would not follow.

Upon my stating another objection, he went on in the following strain :

We come to know when our assumptions are erroneous, as we come to all certainty, namely, by experiment. Up to a certain point, we receive our knowledge passively : we have not yet the materials for supposition, and therefore suppose nothing ; nevertheless, knowledge comes. Then begins activity of thought ; we try to know beforehand, and interpret the untried as we can. If experiment confirm the interpretation, it is science attained ; if experiment set aside the interpretation, it is error dismissed ; if experiment is impossible, the interpretation ought to be set down as having been altogether idle : into which category, metaphysics, as they have been commonly pursued, should be cast without mercy.

It occurred to me that much more than he had stated remained to be considered, when a review was to be made of human knowledge in its whole nature and extent. I urged that the mind has ideas which have no originals in matter, in tracing the relations among which, it reaches science quite distinct in character from experimental science,—science so different, so distinct, that the name *science* has been claimed for such knowledge alone, in contradistinction to all knowledge the result of experiment. His answer was to the following effect :

In asserting that all knowledge springs from experiment, much no doubt remains to be stated, to reconcile the position to facts which seem, but only seem, to contradict it. Let the facts be at once received and examined ; but not by the light of the unproved and unprovable assumptions which are made to appear a part of them. It is lamentable that men will pretend to higher knowledge than they can reach, when, having certain knowledge, their plain duty is, to state just so much as they know, and no more. We know with experimental certainty that man is a thinking, reasoning creature, that is to say, a creature having higher intelligence than brute instinct ; but we do not know, and, with our present powers, we cannot scientifically know, the creative necessity through which he stands thus distinguished. To explain the fact by the assertion of a double nature in man, which double nature is asserted to divide the universe, while it leaves brute creatures only in one division, is pure assumption beyond proof either that it is, or is not so. Instead of such assump-

tion, let us go back to experimented facts,—let us consider how knowledge begins, and the character it takes in its progress.

I reminded him that if he was going to bring forward his own experience of the way in which human knowledge begins, his testimony could scarcely be received, because no other human being, it is probable, could go back so far as himself in personal experience, to corroborate it. He answered :

It might be true that he could not corroborate, by another's testimony, what he was about to avouch ; but if his statement of what takes place in our earliest reception of knowledge, is entirely consistent with all subsequent reception, it ought to be received in preference to assumptions altogether fanciful. Thus much at least is certain,—that our earliest knowledge comes without our seeking for it,—that it comes from the same occasions that awaken the instinct of brutes,—and that, up to a certain point, it comes with like uniformity to all the species, all men of perfect faculties having, up to a certain point, the same understanding, or, as it is commonly called, *perception*, of the same familiar things. But there is an *original* difference between brute and human intellection,—a difference which escaped Locke, who, without intending it, has in consequence led many of his followers into materialism. The difference is this :—brute intellection, because it is instinctive, is immediate ; that is, it is immediately linked to its appropriate sensation, so that the occasion for the knowledge no sooner occurs, than the knowledge occurs with it ; but man's intellection is rational, and must,

even in the very earliest states of his being, await its media. That is to say, nothing is understood—perceived—by one of our race, till it presents itself in relation—in contradistinction—to something else; these two, the thing known, and the thing by which it is known, are the media, and the knowledge is the included consequence. It is because man understands in this way, and only in this way, that he invents language,—the effect and the evidence of rationality. He abstracts his knowledge from the thing known, and embodies it in a sign. With the signs of his abstract knowledge, he forms the speech which takes place of the natural exclamation that the occasion would otherwise prompt, the signs losing their abstraction in the more particular meaning which they thus unite to express. And once in possession of this powerful instrument, *rational language*, to carry on the process of reasoning independently of the things which first suggested the relations to his understanding, he feels as if there were no limits to the process. It is not, however, that he is able to come at a single relation in his present state of being, that has not been suggested by the things that belong to this state of being; but it is that he feels an illimitable scope for exercising the power of contemplating those relations independently of their suggestive occasions. The straight line, for instance, which became what it is to his understanding, in consequence of being apprehended in correlation with, and contradistinction to a crooked line, furnishes the knowledge of what a straight line is, independently of any sensible straight line, independently of the straight

and crooked lines that suggested the knowledge, and irrespective of the subsequently discovered fact to which that very knowledge led, that the sensible straight line, so called, was in fact not rigorously straight, but only relatively so. In this way of accounting for knowledge which is independent of time and place, we get rid of the materialist doctrine that metaphysical conceptions are sublimated from sensible images,—and of all other suppositions put forward whether by the materialists or the Platonists, the Lockeists or the Kantists. We can further very easily see how, through the power of contemplating relations in the abstract, and placing them in juxtaposition, man can discern included relations,—can reach knowledge that escaped the weakness of his earlier acts of understanding, which undeveloped knowledge, nevertheless, those earlier acts included. Now all truth thus attained is, of course, like the abstract relations from which it proceeds, independent of the conditions of time and place. But what then? Is there anything in the fact, when thus plainly stated and experimentally traced, to render necessary the system after system of speculative philosophy, occupying the whole period from the dawn of learning to the present moment, in order to account for it?

I objected that, in spite of all he said, I could not believe that such terms as *matter* and *mind*, which all people receive and use, were devoid of corresponding realities. He answered thus:

Words may be most convenient for the purposes of speech, and most extensively used, to which, never-

theless, in their abstract unapplied state, it would be absurd to seek for corresponding realities. Take the word *something* as an example. We call a horse something, a tree something, a stone something, a sound something, a smell something, a flavour something, a minute something, a space something, a breath something, a dream something, a thought something, a shadow something, a delusion something. But independently of these, and of everything else to which the name can be given, is there any reasoner, now that realism is exploded, who is prepared to assert that, at the back of the abstract term, there is a corresponding reality? Yet it stands in contradistinction to another term, by which, even in its abstract, unapplied state, a certain intelligible existence is given to it,—namely, the word *nothing*. If the terms *matter* and *mind* are universally accepted, the fact may be accounted for in the same way. They are convenient words, and, by contradistinction, give intelligibility to each other.

I told him I did not clearly see that all speculative philosophy began with, and proceeded upon an unproved and an unprovable assumption. He said that he had repeatedly tried to make that point plain. When I urged that repetitions on a point so likely to elude my sagacity would not be superfluous, he continued :

First we have from Plato the doctrine distinctly put forth, that MATTER and MIND, substances assumed to exist, and to be wholly distinct from each other, divide and make up the universe. This point, namely the existence of these two substances, remains

unquestioned through all subsequent speculation. But a difference of opinion soon took place concerning the manner in which these distinct principles acted on each other, as well as on the fact whether both were of previous eternal existence, or only one of them ; and then, which was eternal and gave existence to the other. With Plato and his immediate followers, both were eternal ; but even his immediate disciples did not all receive his sublimely poetic doctrine of eternal forms or ideas, which, emanating from the divine mind, impress the world of matter, and give all such distinctness and all such beauty to it, as our minds, the waves as it were of the one spiritual ocean or divine mind, are able to discern. Aristotle, less of a poet and more of an experimenter than his master, refused this interpretation of ideas, insisting that they were derived from the things of sense in forms already existing ; which things dispersed phantasms that reached the human mind, and in this way became ideas, or the representatives within, of all that existed in the material world without. Materialism having begun with this first step, soon took a second. It was denied, by some following speculators, that anything originally existed but matter and motion, out of which two things, as the highest of their effects, mind was evolved. On the contrary, other speculators, especially Bishop Berkeley in modern times, affirm,—and with irrefragable force of argument, if the division of the universe into mind and matter be the only remaining alternative,—that there is no such thing as matter, but that all is mind ; that we are under a delusion when we talk of matter ; for if sensation is a

mental affection, and all our ideas are only mental furniture, and all our emotions are consequent on these,—then, since these make up the whole of our experience,—we must be deluded whenever we think that anything else but mind exists. Leibnitz could not join himself either to the materialists or the spiritualists; but he felt the difficulty which had driven them to their two extremes of opinion, namely, that of bringing two substances of admitted distinctness as to origin and kind, into mutual action, and he escaped the difficulty by affirming that they never do blend or act on each other in any way, but that, through the arbitrary arrangement of Creative power, the acts of the one are for ever coincident with the acts of the other, so that, for instance, the mind never wills but at the moment when the body acts, and the body never acts but at the moment when the mind wills. No one of these various opinions concerning matter and mind had force enough to win universal assent, and speculation was still busy when Kant arose in Germany. A Platonist by previous bias, he was struck by the difference of what appeared to him the pure ideas of reason, and those which we receive through the senses: the former were evidently free from the conditions of time and place, the latter were subject to these conditions. Now, if man is, by his nature, capable of ideas which are independent of time and place, then, in Kant's view, must man himself be independent of time and place,—not indeed the material man, but the spiritual man. But the spiritual man is the permanent eternal man;—the material man exists but for certain transient ends in

the other :—that is to say, the mind exists not in the body, as is commonly taught, but the body in the mind. In order to fit him for these transient ends, the eternal man, so Kant teaches, is provided with the two receptivities, TIME and PLACE, for MATTER to be poured into, in order to be moulded by his temporal, or merely human understanding, into the things of sense. Such was the improvement upon Platonism, which spread like lightning in the metaphysico-poetical atmosphere of Germany, though beyond it, a long time elapsed before it became in any degree known ; and when at length it began to be studied elsewhere, it was losing ground at its birth-place. For hypothesis, if only hypothesis, can never stand still. The abstractions which enable one to construct it, have only to be shifted, like the substances in a kaleidoscope, and a new combination is presented, though nothing is added, and nothing taken away. Kant has been followed by Fichté, Fichté by Schelling, Schelling by Hegel, each with some change of view ; and the changes will go on for ever, unless the light of common sense, and plain experimented fact, shall be able to shine through these fogs of mystical speculation, and leave distinguishable the only useful path in which metaphysics can tread.

When Harold had delivered himself to this purpose, not in these words, but in language cold and passionless as a snow-shower, he fell back into his habitual state of entire abstraction, and left me with a freezing in my blood, which threatened to reduce me to a condition like his own. For I must inform my reader that my early intimacy with Harold had never made

me a metaphysician. What appears in any preceding part of this memoir, indicating, as from my own pen, an interest or an opinion in metaphysics, has been written lately. At the time of the conversations with Harold which I am now recording, I entertained, on the subject of matter and mind, the ordinary prepossession, namely, that the existence and distinctness of the two are self-evident as an axiom, and the moment this prepossession was cut from under me, I felt as if I had lost my hold on immortality,—as if I were sinking into a vast vacuity, with no power within myself of rising again. I then cast a glance at my companion, a scarcely breathing form, and, if his own declaration was to be believed, a form that was without a soul. But how without a soul, so the thought occurred to me, unless the soul and the body were distinct things? I was glad to catch at this remnant of a persuasion, on which I thought my immortality depended, and I roused him to hear my further opposition. He met my observation thus:

The word *soul* is justly used only as another name for *man*; as in the beginning of the Bible, where it is said that man became a living soul: or as a synecdoche, a part of man for the whole. Now a man may lose his sight, or his hearing, or his sensibility to touch, or his power of moving. Just so may he lose his soul,—lose that which makes him distinctively a man,—lose the faculty of rising by faith, hope, and charity exercised in this state of being, to the happiness of another and a better state. The immortality promised in the Bible is a conditional immortality.

When a man has become a brute in his desires and pleasures, he can have no claim to it.

I observed that if he was determined to consider himself a second Faustus, he should remember that his prototype does not lose his immortality: his despair arises from the fact that he cannot lose his soul. Marlow makes him say,

“ All beasts are happy ; for when they do die,
Their souls are soon dissolved in elements ;
But mine must live still to be plagued in hell.”

Harold said in answer, that the legend of Faustus, if it had any consistent meaning, implied the resignation of the soul, that is, of the whole man, to all the bad passions of our nature, so that it becomes fit for hell, as the obedient soul fits itself for heaven. With regard to himself, he had not devilized his soul ; he had never loved evil for the sake of evil, nor hated the good he did not reach ; but he had kept his talent in a napkin, enshrouded it in joys born of and tending to earth, and it was justly taken from him. He was a brute, but nothing worse : faith, hope, and charity, were beyond his reach ; but the philosophic virtues were still in his power, and he still practised them.

The female laughing voices which I had heard on a former occasion, now again struck my ear, as proceeding from at least two persons, in passing from one room, at some little distance, into another.

“ The philosophic virtues ! ” I exclaimed.

He did not notice the interruption, but went on to say that if a hog or a goat were to have its brute instinct changed into human reason, that reason, if no higher endowment were at the same time conferred,

could show its perfection in no other way than by directing the creature just as instinct had prompted it before. For instinct is the Creator's intelligence operating immediately in the creature : reason is the same intelligence, only that, it operates through media, which media are liable to be falsified by unwarrantable assumptions. A rational brute shows the perfect operation of his reason by living as a brute.

I beg to mention, that the conversations which put me in possession of the foregoing views, occupied several days, so that it was now the sixteenth of December. On the eighteenth we were to leave London by a morning train, so as to reach the home of our early days (the house had become temporarily vacant) by about mid-day. I had continued writing to my sister, and such was the effect of custom, though only of a few days' growth, in reconciling me to Harold's changed appearance,—such my admiration of the clear, though cold and chilly stream of argument that daily issued from his lips,—that my letters lost much of their gloomy character, and gave, I am sure, a more favourable view of Harold's state than was consistent with fact. One thing I could not but acknowledge to the quondam merchant's cashier, that the integrity of his Principal was unimpeachable : all people were punctually paid according to their services ; or if, through involuntary failure on his part, a wrong was inflicted, he was ready to make every amends in his power. I could not help considering it as a proof of this sense of justice, that he obliged me to look at his will, which, with no heavy deductions in favour of certain persons, some of whose names he

would not let me see, devised the whole of his fortune to my sister and myself, two-thirds being assigned to her. I did not acquaint my sister with this fact. I knew it would operate with a cruelly disquieting effect upon her mind ; but I am not quite sure that it did not operate on mine in an opposite manner. It is true I did not indulge, or at least I tried not to indulge, any distinct persuasion of living beyond him to enjoy his wealth ; yet when I looked on his blasted though sinewy form, I could not keep the idea wholly out of mind.

The following was to be the last day of these set conversations. When it arrived, I took care to be at his residence in good time, and I found him ready to receive me. I was now particularly anxious to draw from him his own account of what, with reference to his lapsed condition, might well be called his temptation and fall. I therefore took an opportunity to ask him what he meant in his letter to me, by saying that he had sold his soul. With his clear intellect, I did not think that he could really believe himself a modern Faustus, or that a compact could be literally entered into with the author of evil or his emissaries. He answered that the clearness of his intellect did not prevent him from believing much that lies beyond the region of present knowledge. He reminded me of the very narrow limits which his metaphysical views assigned to this region, and the consequent immeasurable space it left open on every side for belief. As for himself, if he filled that space with intelligent beings rising from those of earth up to the highest of beings, it was not in him the work of imagination,

for imagination was dead in him, but a speculation resting on analogies which the known world suggests:—it was accordingly a belief that all thoughtful people readily embraced. He differed however from those, who, in using the term *spiritual* to distinguish the higher orders of beings, think they understand their nature. No knowledge can exist under that term, which does not equally exist when we declare that, believing such orders to be, we are quite unacquainted with their nature and their manner of existence. Why deceive ourselves, where knowledge is unattainable without the gift of a sixth or a seventh sense, by using words to hide our unavoidable ignorance, when we should use them to avow it? Let us be satisfied with believing that when we shall fall—(I speak, said my unfortunate friend, not of myself but of those who are not lost as I am)—when we shall fall, like over-ripe fruit, into corruption, we shall rise again from our former elements, as the fruit from its seed; and so rising, our manner of existence will be inconceivably changed. But then, what must the elements be that shall win for the man of earth this new and glorified being in heaven?—elements that have had, while here, only life and instinct?—elements having only life and intellect, which, if applied to nothing but the preservation and the propagation of life, is but a fallible instinct? Rather say, elements which even while here had begun to detach themselves from what is earthly, by aspirations after a good that we cannot now reach, and by that devotion of the passions to the higher good, which exalts and purifies the whole of our nature.

I give the meaning which my companion conveyed, but his style and manner I cannot communicate. The reader of some formal document who has no interest or concern in its contents, could not be more frigid or mechanical. He made a short pause, and then proceeded to say, that his speculative belief went further than to admit the existence of intelligent beings, the ministers of good, that are now impalpable. If preparation for a better state of being must begin now, in order to ensure it hereafter, there may be those among us who are already ripe for the change, and fit, while still on earth, to be ministers of good to their fellow-denizens upon it. Such an angel of good he believed to have been appointed for himself. If, on the other hand, it is possible for the human heart to create a beginning hell within itself,—if envy and malice,—the hatred of excellence in others,—the capacity to draw enjoyment from their distress,—in short, the love of evil for the sake of the evil,—be the possible declension of our human nature here,—then have we devils among us as well as angels; and “to such a devil,” said he, “I made over my soul while yet I had a soul to lose.”

I listened with a shudder, which was the more violent, because the recollected fact, if fact it was, did not stir in him a single emotion: there was not the least change in the death-like calmness of his wintry voice. My feeling must have been sufficiently evident to a less abstracted person, but as it kept me speechless, it was unobserved by him; so that after a few minutes' silence, his chilly clear voice was again heard. He told me, what I had already learned from King,

that he first met his seducer at church at a high festival, when her apparent ecstasy of devotion transfixed him with what he conceived to be a feeling of the purest reverential regard. At that time he had begun, or thought he had begun, an improvement on the life which, on every relapse into himself, he had led while in London. He had commenced by thinking more properly concerning derelictions of personal purity. If he sometimes failed, he did not boast of it among young companions, but felt it as a shameful necessity created by habit, unfit, like other base necessities, for any ears, unless perchance of a medical adviser:—yes, he felt it shameful that he had impeded the growth within his heart of that refined love which burns only for one, excluding all baser flame that, derived like itself from earth, has not, like itself, been purified by fire from heaven. To gain the wholesome sentiment was now difficult; but with a wholesome way of thinking as a commencement, he did not, at *that* time, believe the achievement impossible. He became a devotee, and meditated on the Saviour's life. What self-sacrifices were not possible, if he determined to follow Him, who having the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them at his feet,—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,—had turned his back upon the tempter, and passed on to his high and holy mission? To such reflections, my friend declared that he yielded with all the ardour of that poetical nature which was then so strong in him, though now extinct; and the æsthetic appeals to the heart, of which devotion in Italy makes such liberal use, were, on this account,

particularly acceptable to him. Hence it was that he found himself at church on a high-mass day, and hence the respect with which he looked upon one, whose devotion seemed even more rapturous than his own. Aware of the impression she made, this person took care to increase it by seeming to avoid him, and yet leaving a way open by which he might become acquainted with her. She appeared at once to comprehend his character, and to discern, as if by inspiration, the bias of his mind at the moment,—the virtue by which vice might most readily be insinuated. Once introduced to her, she managed that his visits should be repeated; but always under restrictions apparently the most prudent. At these times, their conversation ever took its character from the place and the occasion that had made them acquainted. She very soon gave him to understand that it was her intention to renounce the world, and take the veil. Although she had done her utmost, she said, to chasten her heart, she felt too weak for the temptations that beset her, alone as she was, mistress of her own person, and of a fortune too large for an individual. She consulted him about the charitable disposal of the larger portion of her wealth, mentioned the convent to which she intended to retire, and the time when her noviciate would begin. In this manner she drew from him, in return, a revelation of his own moral weakness, his determination to grow a better man, and be, in some degree, worthy of one, to whom he had long been plighted, and of whom he hoped to be the devoted husband, by the time she should be the bride of Him, who died to redeem her

from worldly thralldom. The effect of this revelation on a mind such as hers can hardly be conceived by a virtuous mind. From the moment she learned that his heart and faith were pledged to one, whose purity, as it was described and acknowledged by him, doubled the consciousness of her own foul heart, his seduction and fall, he did not doubt, were determined on. Yet she pretended to hear his narrative with great pleasure, encouraged him to tell her more, and never missed an occasion of praising his fidelity to his English bride, as she already called her. These occasions were frequent. For besides being a constant guest at her evening parties, she at last managed that, by insensible degrees, in which the prudence of a scrupulous lady was never in appearance forgotten, he became an admitted visitor at any hour of the day; and then they learned to extend their subjects of talk: they played and sang every new composition in music; they examined works of art; they read and recited the poets; and, by all the abundant means which lay within their reach, they administered to the sense of ideal beauty, which in him at least was keen up to the highest degree of enthusiasm. These more private visits and conversations were always in the presence of an aged female, who was at the head of her household; nor, for a time, was any means omitted to impress him with the conviction of the strictest manners, and the purest motives. "Is it not exquisite," she would say, "thus to give a loose to imagination, and to know that we restrain it within the bounds of Christian principle? In this communication of soul with soul, you break not your fealty

to the bride of your early choice ; and, for my part, I am no more conscious of difference of sex in your company, than I shall be among the holy sisters with whom I am soon to be joined.”—Harold, with all his metaphysical views and general ability, was a simpleton when he had to deal with cunning. Without any deceit in his own character, he never suspected it in others. Else, it would be wonderful that he should have listened to this woman without any misgivings of her virtue and sincerity, and have drunk in all he heard and all he saw with confidence in her truth :—a woman whose lusts were unbounded ; who stopped not short of poison and the dagger when her desires were obstructed ; was skilful in the effects of herbs and minerals on the frame ; and who employed the old creature that stood over them with the exterior of a saint, not as a safeguard to her person, but as a practised assistant in whatever machination an Italian head can devise. She well knew that he was not likely to have been backward, if she had manifested warmer sentiments than she chose at that time to discover. But a victory over the fealty he had professed to his intended bride would, as she well saw, turn out but a poor achievement, unless she carried it further than the easy triumph that offered at any moment :—she perceived that his better feelings, as they had survived other casual connections, so they would throw off the sully of any new one ; that like a bird getting clear of the lime, he would, if she should be an easy sacrifice, soon leave her for a purer affection,—for the society of one that, compared with her conscious self, was an angel

of light. Clearly seeing all this in the future, it was to her as if it had already taken place ; the envy, the jealousy, the revenge of her soul were in arms, and her steps to secure a less questionable triumph, were as cautious as her purpose was deep and hearted. Completely understanding Harold, she knew him to be as capable as herself of a wild abandonment to the senses, and she kept back the infinite voluptuousness of her person, as the skilful cannoneer masks his enginery, till the advantageous season of attack. “ You know, Frank,” said he, —and here his eyes lost their passionless opacity, the blood began to mount into his cheek, and the anatomy of his frame to start into life,—“ You know, Frank, that I am pretty familiar with the forms of female beauty ; but how shall I give you an idea of the shape, which by degrees, at different times, was, as if by accident, half revealed, and then hastily concealed with summoned blushes, and the mask of shrinking modesty ? Where are limbs so round, so smooth, so perfect, so maddening to the touch ?—where are eyes that so melt and sink into the soul ; that tell so well the secret not trusted to the tongue, and convey a fire so subtle through a lover’s frame. The very atmosphere around her caught hold on the yielding senses ; while her heaving bosom”—

I rose up suddenly ; for again the Satyr was before me that had excited the indefinable revulsion I experienced on a former occasion. He perceived the effect he had produced, and ran from the room, as he had done on my first visit. While I again remained lost in a confusion of conjectures and indescribable

fears, King, as before, brought an apology from his Principal, and, at the same time, a packet of letters, telling me that these would complete the story which (so he had just been informed) was left unfinished. On opening the packet, I found that the letters were in Italian, a language I could not readily interpret; and I was therefore obliged to get King to assist me. With his help, I made a translation, from which the following extracts are taken. These extracts are from the letters of later date; the earlier letters bear the date of September. I pass by those, and begin with the following extract:

“October 7 (1846).

* * * *

“You must excuse me for having been denied to you when you called yesterday. We must discontinue our meetings, or make them less frequent: they become more serious than I ever intended. We have both of us duties in view. I must prepare myself for my noviciate, on which I enter in a month or two; and your return to England to meet your bride ought not, as you are aware, to be delayed longer than the end of this month or the beginning of the next. We shall then remember one another as having met in a dream; nor will there be, on either side, any clog of conscience to bear down the ethereal sweetness of that impression. I will see you, during the ensuing fortnight, only once. Come on Sunday evening at about eight, and we will talk metaphysics together.”

“October 13.

“Why should you have supposed you would find me alone on Sunday evening? Are not my little

parties generally on a Sunday? I could not help your disappointment, as you call it, in having only a general share of my conversation. But for the impertinent forwardness of Gaetano, who left his wife to keep you in talk (by the by, I think she has a design upon you), I should have devoted myself more to you in particular. I will not invite those people again. Do you know I have had it whispered to me that you and I are much talked about, and that if you were known to be a frequent private visitor to me, there would be no end to the scandal? You must be careful of my reputation. The next time you are invited—but this will not be yet, and perhaps not at all—take care that your steps are not watched. You know the way into the garden, and thence to the private door, which opens into the passage of my boudoir. Some evening, perhaps, when I get into a metaphysical doubt which I think you competent to solve, I may send for you. Adieu!”

“October 18.

“Come to-morrow evening at about eight o’clock: you will find me at home, and alone.”

“October 19.

“I must retract my invitation. I will tell you why when I write next, which I shall be enabled to do the day after to-morrow.”

“October 21.

“You have my promise to write to-day. I am going to my confessor to-morrow, and I must undisguisedly make known to him the true state of my feelings. In a few days, I will write to you again.”

“October 29.

“I have been to confession, and was confounded by the secrets that were dragged from me—secrets as little suspected by myself as by my ghostly examiner. Do you know, I have pledged myself not to see you again until—but I did not quite promise, and at all events, I can again clear my bosom by confession, if again I should err. Shall you leave our shores quite so soon as you expected? At least, you will not go without giving me notice. Wait only for some few days till I am more composed, and you may depend on again hearing from me.”

“November 6.

“Notwithstanding all you write, there appears no necessity to go so soon. The festival occasion which is to unite you in rejoicing with your early friends, is, by your own account, six weeks distant. The transit is now so rapid from us to the spot you seek, that a day or two will bring you to it. Go, if you like, at once; but I really should wish to see you before you leave me for ever. I have a few mementos of myself which you may conscientiously receive, and one for your bride, which she will not refuse, if your picture of her unjealous nature is a true one. Could you not spare so much of yourself as to allow me to take a likeness of you? You must come by day-light for that purpose. Let me see you to-morrow morning, and the succeeding days. Of course, you must allow my old trustworthy duenna to be with us at each sitting.”

“November 20.

“I have, in your absence, put the last finish to your portrait. It looks very well by candle-light, and I would rather you should see it so, because the imperfections are less discernible. Come this evening soon after eight, and take the way through the garden.”

“November 21.

“The event of yesterday fills me with confusion. I shall turn the girl away who suffered you to pass into my boudoir, unless you can verify her story that she positively refused your entrance. I did not expect you so soon, and had fallen asleep in the undress you surprised me in. You ought to have retired immediately; and I have a right to be offended at your rudeness. It was well that my faithful guardian was at hand; a good fortune I could hardly have expected; for she generally reposes in her own room at the hour you arrived. I do not apologize for your speedy dismissal. Before I see you again, which, I must avow, I earnestly wish to do, I must recover myself a little. Next week I will write again, and state the time of a final interview,”

“November 30.

“I had determined not to answer your notes; but my resolution gives way. Let me see you this evening.”

“December 6.

“We are the creatures of circumstances. Our lives are marked out for us before we are born—so I believe—and that neither you nor I can hinder what is about to take place. You will be married, before two

months are over, to her of your early choice, and I shall be taking the first step which is to separate me for ever from the world. I do not seek to disturb this high arrangement of our destinies; yet why not dally a little with the time now within our grasp? Is it indispensable that you should be in England at the moment you say? Let us talk the matter over calmly and dispassionately this evening. You will find me ready to receive you at any time after seven."

"December 7.

"Alas! how have I betrayed to you the weakness of my soul! I thought I had more command over myself, or I should never have asked you to come yesterday, to be a witness of tears which forced their way in spite of all the sentiments of religion, of honour, and of pride, which I summoned to assist me. But pray do not mistake me: I write expressly to prevent your doing so. Think not that I place myself as a rival to your honourable bride: I can be a bride only to Him crucified: nor, had I other views than the convent, would I ever put myself in the power of any living man by swearing to the duties of a wife. I share the sentiment of Eloisa; and, independent as I am in worldly circumstances, am not likely, by any weak yielding of the heart, to renounce a determination I have held ever since I felt the pulse of womanhood in my veins. I need not repeat, after what passed yesterday, that I shall regret to part from you; but part we must. Perhaps the parting might be less bitter if—but I have already shown my weakness too plainly without going further;—and for whom have I

shown it? For one who, in less than a fortnight from this time, will think of me with contempt, if he thinks of me at all; for one who will not sacrifice to me a few weeks of a preconcerted arrangement, which can as easily be carried out in one month as in another. I must think of what is due to myself; and therefore once more, and for ever, I bid you adieu. I shall lock myself up for the following week. Should you choose to reply to this communication, you may do so; but you must not expect an answer till after that time. Your other alternative is, to betake yourself to your place of destination, with this letter triumphantly borne in your pocket."

" December 15.

" I have been hesitating, for a long time, whether I ought to answer your hesitating notes. It seems we are both wavering. How foolish is this! Take your own course at once, and I shall be satisfied. For my part, I shall waver no longer than you do, because I am sure our present actions, though they may delay the future, cannot prevent it from being what it is meant to be. You seem to attach some importance to the eighteenth of the month instant. I did not think you had that sort of weakness about you. Now hearken to me:—you have often complained that I have trifled with you—that I have placed bars and hindrances to that unreserved conversation with me, which my notes had given you reason to expect. I will make a COMPACT with you. Wait till the eighteenth—give up so much to me—and I will no longer furnish you with reason to complain

that I yield nothing on my part. Do not construe what I say in a worse sense than I intend ; but if you choose to trust to my promise, come at ten o'clock through the garden gate *on that evening*, and you will have a ready access to me,—to me whom you will find alone."

After translating, with King's assistance, all the letters from which the foregoing extracts are taken, we came to the last letter in the packet. On looking at the date, it appeared to have been written ten months after the last of those which have been partially exhibited above ; and it differed from them by being without signature, and by being in a sort of disguised hand ; though the identity of the writer could nevertheless be conjectured, even at a casual inspection. In trying, with King's usual help, to ascertain its character, it struck me that many passages were hardly fit for publication. But before we proceeded to a minute inspection of its contents, I asked King whether he could give me any history of Harold, during the ten months which intervened between the dates of the last two letters. He told me, in reply, that it was some few days after the eighteenth of December in the preceding year that he reached Rome, with the documents necessary for placing Mr. Fremdling's property in his own hands. He had previously been sent over on the same business, but had then made no stay. At this second visit, he had occasion to see and know more than the first time he came. Rome was very gay, and all the English in particular were much delighted with the new Pope, who was then extremely popular. Mr. Fremdling had an

abode, or rather a lodging, and two servants were in occupation ; but he had to seek him at the house of the lady whose letters we were reading. He saw him there ; and his appearance was that of a man who is so intoxicated with pleasure as to be scarcely able to lend an ear to the ordinary calls of life. After a time, however, King procured his attention to the business he had come to fulfil ; and subsequently he was induced, at Mr. Fremdling's solicitation, to undertake the entire management of his estate and of his household, which latter, from that moment, was placed on a more liberal footing. " But," continued King, " my Principal was hardly ever at home ; and what was going on in the house where almost all his days and nights were spent, was beyond my power to discover. I believe that nothing was there absent, which luxury, and the arts that minister to luxury, could supply ; and I am sure that those arts never found worshippers of more intense devotion, than the two persons who made that house their temple. At the end, however, of about four weeks, he came home : we understood the lady was indisposed, and chose for some days to be alone. The effect upon him was, that he fell into one of those fits of abstraction to which I believe he has always been subject ; but in this case the fit seemed to affect him in a remarkable manner ; so that in a week, he seemed to have lived two or three years, and to suffer, in his person, as from the lapse of such a period. Out of this fit, he was aroused by a renewed invitation from the lady, for which he appeared to be languishing ; and then recommenced the delirium of enjoyment that had

preceded what I shall call his first fit of abstraction ; for it was the first that I witnessed. Several such fits followed, always preceded by many weeks of wild delight ; and thus the months went on. But while they went on, it was melancholy to see that they were, to your friend, as decades of years,—every pause in his pleasures placing the weight of at least ten years upon his waning frame. It is true that his entrancer, for such she seemed to be, had the power, when she pleased, to restore him to animation ; but his animation lost by degrees its first character ; ceasing to have any joy in it, and, I am warranted in saying, any love : for when, on one occasion, I ventured to expostulate with him, and beg that he would try to break through the bondage of love unworthy of him, he gave me to understand that his feeling was of a very different kind from what would deserve to be called by that name. In short, he gradually declined into the state in which you now find him ; though I think he would still have continued his visits to the lady in question, had he not at last found her doors shut against him. I believe he wrote to her—indeed, I know he did ; and the unsigned letter before you, which closed their correspondence, was the answer he received.”

I am precluded from laying before my reader the whole of the translation which we made from this letter ; but the following are parts of it :

“ October 14 (1847).

“ I have done with you. Your love is degenerated into the love of a brute, of which any common crea-

ture is fitted to be the object rather than I. And your youth—what is become of it? It is gone, along with all those generous sentiments which once made you lovely. You deserve the infliction; for your nobler passions had become faithless to me, all but your brute instinct. You began to contemn me; I know it well: and you calculated on carrying your manly charms, unimpaired, to the arms of another, and throwing me aside as we throw a flower on a dunghill, that, by being worn in the warm bosom, has drooped and faded. They are gone—those charms, and their bloom has been mine! Deep as you are in the science of the sciences, you ask me, a simpleton in learning, how they are gone. You drew for a season so largely on the poetry of your nature, in order to supply the exigencies of the sensual, that at length the bank which yielded the purer currency is forced to stop. There is an explanation for you in your own style—a metaphysical or a mercantile solution of the difficulty, call it as you like. I defy you to substantiate your physical one. *I* drug your wine!—at least must they have been homœopathic doses, or you would not be alive to utter so abominable an untruth. Did I not always drink from the same goblet? not indeed goblet after goblet as you; for that would not have been becoming; but as mistress of the house, I was bound to press you at all times to the utmost limits of civility. But is there no other way of accounting for the withering winter that has smote a part of you, and left the rest? Oh! how I love to puzzle the profound in science! What think you of mesmerism? Recollect when you tried your

eyes upon me, and found mine more powerful, and I fixed you in the cataleptic trance, and had you in my power to work what experiments I would. Have you discovered any difference in the top central parts of your brain, among the phrenological organs said to exist there? But a metaphysician stands aloof from the experimental sciences, and pretends to laugh at what he cannot fathom. Explain the mischief, then, in your own way, and I will not quarrel with your problem, if you only leave me out of it. This, I do not mind telling you, that if I could have produced an effect upon you by my own contrivance, it would not have been precisely the one that has overtaken you.

* * * * *

“ Well ! go to England, and let your bride make much of you. If what they say of brides in that cold clime be true, perhaps my wishes have only attained greater success by falling short of their aim. Your deficiency of soul will possibly be deemed the worst that could befall you. Your soul you leave behind you, and whose can it be if not mine? It is left with me while we live on earth : what will become both of you and me in the next world, neither of us can say. Do you not remember—

* * * * *

“ I cannot look back on the transports of that moment, which gave your completed years into my arms, without some gleam of the wild fire which we both felt, and equally enjoyed. So here let me close our accounts on this side the grave. If there is gall in any part of what I have now written, there is at least the remembrance of love to sweeten the conclusion.”

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INTERVIEW AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

MY last visit at Harold's on this occasion of coming to London, thus terminated ; for it was arranged, that he and King, after an early breakfast, should, on the morrow, take me up at the door of my lodgings, on their way to the terminus. The moment I gained my temporary abode, I sat down to write to my sister. I spoke of our arrangements for the next day ; but while I did so, I felt a kind of prompting that I ought, by some means, to prevent this interview ; for, after all, I did not seem to have reached a full understanding of the infliction which had fallen on this man ; and I might be taking a madman, or worse than a madman, to meet a sister who was prepared for pain, and sickness, and prostration of strength, but had no knowledge of the deeper calamities to which our nature is liable. What, however, could I do at this late hour, and now that all the arrangements were made ? Besides, would it not be a cruelty to disappoint her ? Would it, in fact, be advisable to give up the last hope of operating a change on Harold by her presence, her words, and the soothing sounds

of her voice? With many doubts during its progress, the letter was at last completed. I knew she would receive it before her breakfast hour, and I minutely stated the time at which our party would arrive at our childhood's home. I presumed that her own arrangements were complete; that she had taken care that our aunt, whose life now hung by a thread, would suffer nothing by her short absence; that she must start so as to meet us at the time my letter indicated; that old Thomas, I hoped, would be the driver; and that I begged she would be further attended by one of the female servants; that if she took post horses at the half-way inn, there would be no difficulty in returning on the same day so as to be at our aunt's again by seven or eight in the evening; and that I intended to accompany her back, leaving Harold either to stay for a time at our old home, or return immediately to London.

Such was the plan, and I am thus minute, because, alas! there is not a single point connected with the forthcoming days of bitter regret, that does not, in my mind, swell into importance. I know not how far I am bound to take blame to myself:—my reader will, doubtless, see more cause for blame in me than I was conscious of at the time:—for, in alluding to the features of that extraordinary insanity which overtook the companion of my early days, I have in many passages of the foregoing pages, disclosed, not what I was able fully to comprehend at the time, but what opened to my knowledge afterwards.

We started next morning as had been determined, and reached the terminus in time for the train by

which we intended to travel. There was no change in Harold : he was the same frozen man, with passionless features and vacant eye ; so that, as he sat in a corner of the railway carriage, he might have been almost taken for a corpse that we were transporting in this guise to an undertaker's, in order finally to receive the more usual and decent conveyance to its last quarters. Occupied as my mind was by doubts and anxiety, I was not disposed to force him into conversation ; and he, on his side, having said on the previous days all he had meant to discover, took refuge in his habitual abstraction. As for King, he was in an adjoining carriage, and did not rejoin us till the railroad transit was complete. Now and then, Harold gave some sign of life, by a little change in the position of a limb, and a slight cough of no healthy omen that came on by fits ; but this was almost all. If, at long intervals, an articulate murmur escaped his lips, it referred to what was going on in his abstracted consciousness, and evidently was never occasioned by the least notice of the continually changing scene without. Once, I could not help thinking, from some words he dropped, that his mind was in Italy, and then again in England a year ago, when he had pledged himself to be with us on the day of his majority ; but his words were indistinct, and left me, as before, in a state of doubt and perplexity.

Let it be conceived, then, that in one corner of the carriage (it was a *coupée*, and no one was in it but ourselves) Harold sat in his usual state of *réverie*, and myself in the other, plunged in meditation almost as deep. That meditation was by no means of cheerful

character. I pondered what would, or what could be the issue of this morning's interview. How would the presence of my sister act upon a lover, so peculiarly, so awfully metamorphosed? I had seen enough of him to be apprehensive of ill, but not enough for the apprehension to take shape and consistency. At one moment, I tried to persuade myself that the combination of circumstances by which he would be met—my sister's pure and untiring love, the magic of her look, her voice, her words, amid the scenes of his happy unblemished youth,—would turn out to be the restorative reserved for his peculiar case, and give him back to us with the hopes of past days. When this persuasion failed,—for when I turned my eye to him, my dependence on it gave way,—I sought relief from my ill-foreboding in an opposite direction: I tried to think that as soon as my sister should, like myself, be a witness how different a being he had become, from what he was when her love and my friendship were pledged, the love would cease, as my friendship had cooled: indeed, it was this issue that I most desired. But with all my efforts to believe that the issue, one way or the other, would be a happy one for her and for me, I could not dissipate the cloud of apprehension that hung over me.

In order to reach our village on quitting the railroad, we had to traverse three miles in a hired carriage. Every portion of this space had been marked, during many a year, by our youthful footsteps; and if Harold had been in a sane state, he could not but have felt a most lively interest in viewing, after two years' absence, the old familiar spots. But all signs

of a reviving soul were wanting: he still sat in the corner of the carriage, inattentive to every change of the external scene, and existing only within himself. We reached the door of the familiar mansion. He passed into it from the carriage, with the same indifference with which he would have gone from one room to another in the hired house he had left in London; and turning into the dining-hall, the scene of so many events of his earlier years, sat himself down mechanically without making a remark, or asking a question. I have already apprised my reader that the house was only temporarily vacant. It had been let furnished; and except a few unimportant changes, the aspect of the whole place was the same as formerly. How my own feelings were moved, I leave any one to imagine, who, with unwarped heart, revisits the silent home of his childhood after the lapse of only a few months. My companion had been absent since the end of October 1845; and it was now the 18th of December 1847. Yet no feeling was stirred in him—no remembrance either sweet or bitter seemed to arise. I did not, at that time, believe his abstraction from the outward scene to be wilful; but I think so now. He did not dare recal to mind the purpose of his journey. He would have lost his self-control, which he had thus far maintained, and perhaps calculated on maintaining through the scene that was to come. But he never should have accepted an invitation, which nothing would have prompted me to make, had there not been ignorance on my part, and warm-hearted simplicity on my sister's.

On our arrival, I found a short note which had come by post from my sister, and had crossed my letter. It had been written on the previous evening, evidently under strong excitement, to tell me she should not fail, Heaven willing, to be with us by the time we arrived; that her thoughts of the next day would be sure to prevent her sleeping that night, and therefore she could not fail to rise early, and start so as to be at our house at noon, which she understood to be the earliest hour at which we could arrive. Our arrival had been half an hour sooner than we had calculated upon; so that it wanted that time before she was likely to join us. As I much wished to speak to her before the interview with Harold, I set off on foot to meet her on the way by which I knew the carriage would come. A tempest had been brewing since the morning, and now the wind blew almost a hurricane, while masses of black clouds were careering over the sky. It was a day on which, according to our country superstition, the powers of darkness were abroad; and I must confess I was in a state of mind to embrace the superstition. I had walked about a mile when I saw the carriage approaching, and in a minute more I was seated by my dear sister's side. Her questions were so eager that I could scarce find breath to answer her. "Is he arrived?"—"Is he—at least not more unwell than usual?" "Is there hope that we can soothe and recover him?" To the first two questions I answered satisfactorily; as to the third, I said, "You must prepare, dear Sophy, to meet an altered man." "Oh! I do not come," she said, "to look again on

the bloom of promising manhood, which I am afraid occupied at one time too large a place in my thoughts. I have disciplined my affections, Frank ; and be he as old and decrepit as the fittest inmate of a hospital, I shall, on that very account, be the more attentive to him." I tried to make her understand that there were other changes in him than those of bodily health and appearance ; but my words were mingled with the tempest which was howling around, and which seemed to lend its aid in forwarding the purpose of some demon, whose power against us was special on this day of the year.

We arrived at the well-known door, and she scarcely allowed the carriage steps to be put down, but leaped out, and, in an instant, found her way to the place where Harold was seated. I followed her as rapidly ; and looked for some symptom in her of that revulsion of feeling which, judging from my own experience, I thought his looks must inspire. If she did experience any shudder, she at least concealed and subdued it, and threw herself into his arms with all the cordiality which her pure and deep affection inspired. I remember the manner in which this took place, with a vivid clearness ill agreeing with the distraction I felt at the time. Just at the moment I am speaking of, a gust of wind rushed through the house with so tremendous a sweep, that Sophia started from the arms that had clasped her, and, still allowing Harold to grasp her hand, looked around as if to see what mischief had happened. There had been a noise of windows blown in or broken, and, to my imagination, sounds as of persons entering. I

rushed out of the room with no intention of being absent from it longer than the moment that might explain or remove the sudden alarm ; and having satisfied myself that all was safe, except a few panes of shattered glass, was returning on my steps, when I met my sister running from the room where I had left her,—her eyes lighted up with as much indignation as it was in her nature to feel, and her cheeks flushed with a deep scarlet. I know not what I said to her as she clung to me for protection ; but I remember what she said to me : “ Frank, whom have you brought hither ? Oh ! I did not come to meet a brute ! I have been so treated, so insulted ! ” “ Insulted ! ” I exclaimed, making a step toward a heavy stick that stood almost within my reach—“ No, Frank, it must not be so,” she cried, clinging still more closely to me ; “ call Thomas, and let him tell—I know not what to name him—let him tell that creature, whoever or whatever he may be, to quit us once and for ever.” And Thomas was called and sent with this message into the room, while I attended to my sister, who was in a dreadful state of agitation. She bade me put my hand to her temple and feel the pulsation, which was throbbing as if it would break through. Again she uttered her complaint of insult, and again the scarlet arose and suffused her whole face. I knew not how to calm her, for I felt the same indignation. It is a lasting regret to me, that no one was at hand with presence of mind to touch some other chord than that which was vibrating with such deadly force :—it did not occur to me that to have mentioned something that would

have made her weep, would have been the surest relief; but her tears that in general were so ready to flow, now seemed dried up. At last she thought of a medicine familiar to her own use, which I at once allowed her to try. "Let me go, dear Frank, and fall upon my knees—I trust I shall obtain help to surmount this dreadful trial." And she flew up to her former bed-room. Thomas at this moment returned from the dining-hall, and told me it was empty: he had seen no one there, nor had he, on looking out of the door, discovered any traces of the person we had sent him to. I did not care to verify his statement: my mind was too much occupied by my sister's agitation to bestow a thought on anything else, and I kept pacing up and down the corridor of the lower rooms in expectation of her rejoining me. When, after a considerable time (so at least it appeared to me) she did not return, I called the female who had come with her, and desired her to go up stairs to her young mistress. The girl had scarcely time to reach the room when I heard her scream. I flew after her, and saw my poor sister lying insensible on the floor:—she had fallen from the cushion on which she had been kneeling, and was in a deplorable swoon. We raised her and applied restoratives; but when she gave signs of life, her mind was wandering. We immediately obtained the medical assistance at hand, and despatched a messenger for Dr. Cleland. He was out on his usual course of visits, and did not reach our house till after midnight, when he found the poor patient in the delirium of a brain fever, with the worst symptoms of the disease

but too evident. All that could be devised by our attention, and by medical skill, was attempted during two days of suffering. Our young friend, so dear both to her and me, no sooner heard of our distress, than she joined us, and she and myself were incessant in our care and watchfulness. But my poor sister continued unconscious or wandering. At length, on the third day, I was told that she seemed sensible, and had uttered my name. I immediately approached her bed-side, and met her mild blue eyes faintly beaming on me. When I took her hand, she softly drew me toward her, and moved her lips. I perceived her wish, and placed my ear near her mouth. I then heard her say,—“Grieve not—God is wiser than we. I am happy, confiding fully in my Saviour. Tell Charles I thought of him—but even now my last thought must be another’s. May God in mercy send his grace to that otherwise lost man!”

She said these few words with effort, and had to collect her breath at the intervals. While I was listening with the expectation of hearing more, a feeble pressure of her hand made me raise my head to look in her face. There was a half smile upon her lips, and all her features were placid; but, while I looked upon her, she ceased to breathe.

My reader will not require me to say with what heart I entered upon, or how I fulfilled the mournful duties that now devolved upon me. I hardly recollect how I got through the fortnight that succeeded. As for the man through whom it was that I followed my sister thus to a premature grave,—he who, from his infant years, had cast the dark shadow of his destiny

upon our hearth,—I did my utmost to drive him from my thoughts. I was satisfied to have lost, for the present, all traces of him. I made no inquiries about his disappearance; nor was I told that any one had seen him, or that any one from him had been commissioned to learn the issue of his disastrous visit.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SOUL RESTORED—NOT THROUGH MERIT, BUT
BY GRACE.

OF all my family, none were now left to me but my aunt ; and her remaining days were few. Her faculties were so entirely benumbed, that my sister's absence was not once perceived ; and, as will readily be supposed, we were careful not to embitter her last hours by trying to make known the sad fact that afflicted her household. Her decease took place before the end of the ensuing month, the January of the next year.

An inordinate love of money is not, I hope, my besetting sin. If it had been so, I should have ground for thinking that, at this conjuncture, some demon was trying how far I could be bribed from my sorrows, by making me the sole inheritor of my family's little wealth. With so small a bribe, I should have merited every curse that avarice brings, could the temptation have deluded me out of a single tear. But the temptation was not yet at an end : it would seem as if I was singled out to take a full compensation in money for all the woe that had been brought upon

my family ; and this rather humiliating reflection had a powerful effect in repressing the feelings which worldly prosperity might otherwise have raised in my breast. The following letter, which will explain whence the temptation was about to come, reached me three months after the loss of my dear sister.

“London, March 20, 1848.

“Dear Sir,—Though fully aware of the circumstances which have produced the discontinuance of intimacy between my Principal and yourself, yet I hope the renewal of correspondence on our side will appear quite correct, when I have stated what Mr. Fremdling desires me to make known. He is in a state of such debility from a gradual wasting away, that his life cannot possibly last but a few days longer. I beg further to inform you, that he has executed a new will, by which, except a bequest to myself, which I hope you will not think too large, he has made you his sole heir and executor. With regard to other persons,—in particular two not now necessary to be named,—he has done all that a man of principle can be expected to do ; the two persons in question being now so placed, as henceforward to pursue respectable modes of livelihood if so disposed, toward which they have not wanted his kind advice and direction. His debility of body has, in fact, made him quite an altered man. He is aware of the sad loss you have suffered in the decease of Miss Drake, and no one can deplore it more than himself : I am almost inclined to say no one can feel it so bitterly ; for he alludes to it frequently, and never with-

out tears ; which to me is very remarkable, because, during all the previous time I had been with him, I never saw his eye-lid moistened, or witnessed a single indication of emotion that could occasion a tear. He knows he is near his death ; but he seems quite content and happy to die ; with only one drawback, and that is, his fear that you will not come to see him before he breathes, as he says, his last soul-recovered breath. Therefore I hope, dear Sir, you will not allow what is past, and cannot be altered, to sway you from coming up to London, and calling here to see that all is right ; always remembering what I have stated above, that, excepting the deduction already referred to, you are his whole and sole heir. The aforesaid will is at his banker's.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ Dear Sir,

“ Your very obedient servant,

“ To Francis Drake, Esq.

“ JAMES KING.

“ P.S.—The upholsterers, of whom we rent this house, are rather grasping people, and join other departments of trade to their main business, the performing of funerals being one of them. As I know they will be on the watch the moment a certain occasion may arrive, I think it quite fair to be beforehand with them, by begging to hand you the card of a most respectable firm, exclusively engaged in the undertaking line—friends, indeed relations of mine, whose punctuality and fair dealing may be depended on.”

How this letter affected me on the first receipt of it, I am totally unable to describe, so numerous were

the springs of emotion, and so antagonistic. I did not deign to answer it. The man seemed to have caught his master's cold-blooded speculative wisdom, with such debasement of application as suited his inferior nature. And I had besides good reason, as I thought, for disliking the man, on account of his having kept back from me the full knowledge of Harold's peculiar insanity, and being in this way the indirect cause of my still inconsolable grief. However, after the lapse of two days, the description he gave me of Harold's altered state had its desired effect upon me, and I went up to London.

On reaching Harold's residence, my name was no sooner announced than King hastened to receive me, in order to beg a few moments' audience before I entered the patient's chamber. He tried, by two pleas, to procure excuse for his having kept back anything that he could have told,—first, that he acted under his Principal, who was perfectly sane to direct his Subordinate, though, at some moments, unable to control his own actions ; the second, that, from many circumstances, he was led to believe a restoration to sanity possible, through the personal influence of Miss Drake. He was then going on to say something about the will, when I hastily interrupted him, and desired to be led into the patient's chamber. Harold had already been told of my arrival, and was bolstered up in his bed in order to receive me. What a change from him whom I had last seen—from the intellectual brute to the MAN ! Pale indeed he was, and evidently feeble, and the marks of premature age were still upon him ; but the warmth of SOUL beamed from his eyes,

and played around his lips ; nor had he looked an instant upon me, and put his hand out to grasp mine, when he burst into tears. Ah ! how did I feel at that instant the truth, that “ one touch of nature makes the whole world kin ? ”—in a moment, all the reproaches with which I came loaded, all my resentment, all the aversion which his late icy coldness had generated in my breast,—all melted and passed away, while every tie that had bound our youth together was revived, even that which death seemed to have fearfully snapped for ever ; since I felt, in weeping with him, as if my sister were in effect still ours,—ours in being the object of our common grief, as formerly of our common tenderness.

When we had in some degree recovered ourselves, he entered on a statement of the change that had taken place in him. His late condition, he said, now seemed to him like the darkness of a fearful dream. He avowed it to have been an insanity, the more hideous in its character from the intellectual composure that went with it. This composure could not prevent the mere animal or brute part of his nature from being at times predominant : and the liability, he could not help thinking, would have continued till now, if the animal frame had remained strong. It was not till his frame became weak that he found his better nature reviving, and the power of applying his intellect to improve and direct that better nature again vouchsafed. “ With regard to that sad interview ”—here he again burst into tears, which prevented him from proceeding for a considerable time,—“ With regard to that sad interview, Frank, I had

quite command enough over myself never to have thought of it, if the proposal had not come from you. You remember the warning in my letter :—satisfied with having given you that warning, I confess that when you proposed an interview, and backed the proposal with your sister's solicitation, my self-control was gone. But, dear injured friend ! think not that I seek to palliate what has happened. I am guilty in having yielded to excesses which brought on so deplorable a state of brutality ; and little do I deserve the mercy which has given me back my humanity, and with it, my faith in a resurrection when this frame shall be no longer vital here. To me, at least, there are comforts yet remaining ; and great as is your loss, it is worth considering, Frank, whether Heaven does not mean equally well for you. Let us try to be as cheerful as we may ;—come, we must taste some wine together."

We did so, and he continued,—

"It would have been happy for you, Frank, if, instead of living on to this moment, I had died when I first reached England."

I answered, that, to him, it surely would not have been a happiness.

"Oh no, indeed !" said he ; "I should have died a brute : the mercy which makes me what I am, might not have been vouchsafed. But was it necessary that such a price should be paid for it ? You must tell me, Frank, the tale of her illness and—well ! I can bear to hear you, though too weak to speak plainly myself."

I then narrated, as given in the previous chapter,

all that followed the disastrous interview on the eighteenth of December, concluding with the prayer for Harold, which had scarcely issued from her lips, when my poor sister breathed her last. He listened to every particular with intense, though silent emotion; but the prayer seemed to excite an extraordinary degree of interest, mingled with something of wonder. "Could my recollection," he asked, "assign to the prayer of that departing angel its precise hour and minute." I was able to satisfy him accurately; and my reply had the effect of throwing him, for several minutes, into silent meditation. I asked him to discover his thought. "No, Frank," said he, "I will not again risk your imputation of madness, by telling you what you will no doubt deem an illusion of the brain. But," he continued, taking affectionate hold of my hand, "believe me—

'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.'

He then proceeded to question me concerning Charles Highmore, of whose love for my sister he had been quite ignorant, till my report of her dying words opened the fact, as a light let in for the first time on his understanding. I, at the same time, acquainted him with the engagement, by the fulfilment of which, Charles would become my brother-in-law.

"Good Heaven!" said he, "what a world of happiness has been lost, by not bringing up Sophia and myself as brother and sister! As a sister I should have loved her as she deserved to be loved;

as a suitor I loved her unworthily ; she was too innocently ignorant, too trusting, too single-hearted, to be justly valued by me ; but in Charles she would have found a nature like her own. Your aunt saw all this clearly, and, had she lived, perhaps would have taught me the value of Sophia's love ; but I never understood it till now. Sophia, to have won from me such an affection as she had a right to claim, should have been able to probe me ; to make me ashamed of what was defective in my character ; and to take advantage of my better inclinations : but how could she do this ?—she who believed me, in her strength of love, to be something better than her pure, and innocent, and ignorant self ? Oh ! why was she separated from me in my boyhood when I yearned to call her sister, and why, when I yearned to call your mother mine, was that happiness denied me ?”

“The reason is but too plain, Harry ; I am obliged to confess that my family has not done rightly by you.”

“And see now,” replied he, “how Providence has dealt with us,—in mercy dealt with Sophia and myself. Had the views of your parents been carried out, who will say that the forty or fifty years of married life which we might have spent together, would have been years of happiness to her and to me ? What are a few years, more or less, in a life which, at its longest, is but a short passage to another. Our tale ends in the usual manner, and with far, far more likelihood of truth than other tales can boast—‘and so they were at last united, and lived for ever after, quite happy.’ The persons who suffer from

this policy of your parents are the friends we leave behind—you, my dear brother Frank, that have lost a sister, and Charles, that has been deprived of one whom I feel sure Providence meant to be his wife, if the course of Providence had not been turned aside.”

My reply was,—

“ I perfectly agree with you, Harry, nor can my loss ever be compensated, though the world at large may not think so, in viewing the dispositions of your last will and testament. By the by, as you make me your inheritor in the character of brother, and as Charles will hereafter be my brother, why should you not deal equally with us ?”

“ Your thought occurred to me just now, Frank, but I set it aside. I do not intend to alter what I have done. I will not say to Charles—‘ for the mischief I have occasioned to you, accept so many thousand pounds.’ But when you and he are brothers, Frank, you have my full concurrence to hand over to him as a present from yourself, £*000 in money : I name the exact sum, that you in giving, and he in accepting, may feel the independence of fulfilling a duty. I will put in writing, and sign, what I have said.”

He did so, and after handing me the letter (for the document was in that form), he continued :

“ There might have been another issue to our story, one that I have no doubt you must have had at heart. Your sister might have recovered the shock that my brutality occasioned, and, alienated from me, do you not think she would have listened to Charles ?”

The two points which this query involved, had often been in my mind, but I had never pursued them to a

decided conclusion. I paused for two or three minutes in order to do so now ; and my conclusion was this, a conclusion in which Harold agreed with me,—that, on comprehending his insanity, my sister's indignation would have given way to pity, and though she never could have thought of marriage with him, she never would have married another. She would have followed the example of my aunt, as, indeed, she had often declared she would, if any circumstances whatever should render a union with Harold impossible or improper.

“Thus, then, Frank,” he continued, “has Providence dealt with us, and who shall say that he has not dealt beneficently ? Who can deny that

‘ There’s a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will ;’

—and who will say he does not shape them all to Good ? For my part I deny the existence of any Evil but what is relative. How can we believe that an all-powerful beneficent Being permits evil but to turn it into good, and if that is the end and purpose of evil, its very nature is absorbed in the good that it produces.—

‘ Yet bear up awhile,
And what our bounded view which only saw
A little part DEEM’D evil, is no more.’—THOMSON.

“ Evil !—evil is indispensable to the perception and enjoyment of good : we are so constituted, that we must know evil, in order to be aware of the good which takes its place : without being aware of, we could not intellectually enjoy it.”

I reminded him that the happiness of Eden was independent of the knowledge both of good and of evil.

“And therefore,” said he, “is it a happiness which, like the happiness of heaven, I am wholly unable to conceive. Such conception demands other faculties than we are now endowed with.”

“But has not Milton conceived and described such a happiness?”

“Not in the least degree. There is not a sentence which the poet puts into the mouths of our first parents before the Fall, that does not prove them already possessed of the knowledge of good and evil; their enjoyment of the one being manifestly consequent on their knowledge of the other. How could he otherwise have made their discourse and their manner of happiness intelligible to us?”

“Do you think Milton was himself aware that in attempting to describe the happiness of Eden, his philosophy was at fault?”

“It is immaterial whether he was so or not. As a poet he could not have described it on other principles than he does. Supposing a description possible of happiness united with ignorance both of good and evil, it is certain that, to *us*, it could not be intelligible. But if a poet cannot be called to account for false philosophy, we may not so exempt philosophers; of whom there is not one that has not fallen into a fundamental error of the same description as that which I have remarked in Milton.”

“How do you mean?”

“I mean that all philosophers have failed to per-

ceive, that everything we know exists, in our knowledge, only by virtue of contradistinction to some other things known at the same time with it. I believe I have tried to explain to you, Frank, that a human being does not know his own existence,—that is, does not become a conscious being, till he knows that something exists which is not himself:—neither do we know what pain is, till we know what is relief from pain, what is pleasure;—neither do we know what darkness is till we know what is light:—to the born-blind man who lives in what we call darkness, that darkness is his very self: and if he is taught to speak of it by those who know it in its relation to light, he speaks of it on trust, as a thing with which he has no acquaintance. Just in the same manner as he speaks of darkness, do we speak of the happiness of pure innocence and ignorance; just in the same manner do we speak of infinity, and absoluteness, and perfection, and all metaphysical existence whatever. But except when we have revelation to warrant our trust, all such metaphysical existences are delusive snares, tempting us into inquiries which cannot possibly have a useful termination.”

Here, such was his debility, he was obliged to pause for several minutes. He then said, in feeble tones:

“ I shall die, and leave nothing behind me by which I may be known to have existed, nothing by which I can benefit my race, unless you, Frank, can tell my story with a warning voice, and sketch out my metaphysical views for others to fill up, should the ground I take be thought substantial. As to my

story, it will not hurt its moral that my case is an extreme one ;—I mean extreme in this respect,—that perhaps in no one else has that distinctness been experienced of the three parts of our human nature, which has been remarkable in me. Of my besetting sin, I think I may say I am not an extreme example. Many a hoary wretch whose vice cannot plead nature's force, would serve for a better, with a claim to rank not among the brutes, but as something more vile than a brute can be.—As to my metaphysics—”

Here I told him I was greatly afraid I should not be able to do justice to his views, from my incapacity to imitate the language in which he had opened them ; language which, however appropriate to the subjects, had a coldness in it that I could not make my own. Indeed, I much doubted whether I understood his views.

“ It seems, then, Frank, that our case is the same as that of Hegel and his friend ; for said Hegel on his death-bed to that attending friend, ‘ I leave no one who can explain me to the world, except yourself ; and even you do not understand me.’ But come ; if my style was then too cold to make my views clear to you, let me now recapitulate my doctrine in a style that shall be warmer. I hope that death will keep his finger off for a day or two, so as to leave me time for this my last, or almost my last task ; for I must not forget my prayers before I fall asleep.”

Accordingly, during this, and the next two days, a great part of his conversation was devoted to carrying out this purpose ; and I must inform my reader that, but for this repetition, the sketch of my friend's meta-

physical views, extending through different parts of this memoir, but more especially attempted in the last chapter but one, must have been more imperfect than it is.

In the mean time, my companion grew hourly more feeble. He had medical advice, but it was quite useless. "I think," said he, "it is but decent to die in the customary way under the doctor's hands; though I am confident I know my own case better than my doctor: he cannot, by his pills or draughts, stop this softening of the brain. What I have been careful of, is, not to put myself under a Scotch metaphysical doctor, who might have offended my prejudices by treating me as two beings, Body and Mind, when I firmly believe I am only one: yea, Frank, only one, notwithstanding all my aptitude to exhibit prominently only one, or at most two, of the three aspects of our conscious being at a time, the others or the other being meanwhile in abeyance. The spring of one of these was, indeed, all but choked up in me for ever: blessed be the mercy that has re-opened it!"

In this manner, our conversation was not only without gloom, but cheerful. Nor was his cheerfulness assumed; he evidently felt it. As for myself, he bade me think how much happiness was in store for me. "Time," said he, "mellows our grief for the departed, till at last the grief itself is sweet. You will not, I am sure, forget your sister; and, however you may regret that I have lived, I hope you will be able to blend my memory with hers in death. Let

me be buried by her side. Set up for me a broken column—it is a common-place token, but peculiarly appropriate in my case:—for your sister, let a tapering pyramid point to heaven:—plant our graves according to your taste, and sometimes come to the spot, and try to find, in recollections of the past, some consolation for the sadness which may creep over you, when at your Christmas or other hours, you may think how happy it would have been to count among your number the two sleepers, who can now no more be roused to this world's joys. Yes, Frank, a broken column will be my fit memorial—my life has been a failure: and must hereafter be a blank in human memory, if you retrieve not from it some few relics. I am sprung from I know not whom; I leave no posterity to mark that I have been; and must sink as a single wave in the vast ocean of existence, unless, dear Frank, I shall live in your remembrance, and in your efforts to unfold how I had hoped to make evident the false glimmer of past metaphysics, and to point out paths in which future inquirers may travel without danger of delusion.”

The plaintive composure with which my companion spoke all that I am here recording, was a proof that his anxiety to be remembered did not interfere with the happy serenity of his soul. To his wants we were incessantly attentive; and I am obliged to confess that King fully did his part in the duties we had to perform. I was sometimes half tempted to show Harold the letter which he had sent me, along with its business-like postscript. The quondam clerk, I

plainly saw, was in agony lest I should do so. He had entertained no idea, as the reader may suppose, that Harold and I should again be on terms of confidence: he imagined my business in London would be limited to that of seeing the property safe, and its present possessor in the grave. However, had I told Harold of the postscript, he would have found nothing in his attendant's character that he was not already aware of. He had engaged him for services trustworthy in a money point of view, and so far he found him faithful. Considering what the master had been during the year's service, all regard of a higher kind in the servant was beyond reasonable calculation. Hence Harold would only have laughed, had I made the exposure. There was no necessity to make it, and I did not; though I was glad to keep the man of business in a state of merited apprehension on the subject.

Our conversation, as may be well believed when death was so near, embraced religion as well as metaphysics. "I wish it to be known," said Harold, "that I die not only in the faith of a Christian, but a member of the particular communion in which your father brought me up. I trust in the mercy of God through faith in my Saviour." I told him I was most happy to hear him express himself in so orthodox a manner; for I had not been able to divest myself of an opinion that his religion was of too latitudinarian a character. "I may be liable to that censure," he answered, "but my transcendental tendencies must plead my excuse. I must own that having tried to place myself far

above the point from which each man takes his own view of his own path in Christianity, I have lost that near vision which sees importance in differences that only a near vision can detect. I think I see how all these narrow paths might unite, and be one spacious path, allowing good practical Christians to walk abreast, however they might differ on points of doctrine that never have been settled, and seem as if they never can be settled. But even this opinion of mine, I do not wish to impose on others. Suppose I am right, I do not seek to hasten a consummation which Providence will bring about in his own way, and his own time. Meanwhile, it is well that each man should belong to some one community of religionists; for it is, if I mistake not, by doing his duty there, that he will forward the designs of Providence, provided that, at the same time, he maintains and acts upon a candid allowance for those who are out of his own pale."

With such varied discourse as I have endeavoured to record, we occupied four days, exclusive of that on which I rejoined my friend. On the last of these, he could speak but for a few minutes at a time; and at length the only signs of life which he exhibited were a frequent slight smile, and a pressure of my hand while I watched him. I have already said, or at least have intimated, that, throughout the whole time, he was spared from bodily pain; while nothing could be clearer than that all within was the fulness of peace and hope. We never left him—I am speaking of King and myself, without mentioning an old female

nurse who assisted us—but continued to administer such liquids as he could receive ; though I believe we might have omitted them entirely. At length, on a bright spring morning, while we were still looking at him, and day-light was streaming through his chamber, he passed away, as a cloud that one watches at day-break grows brighter, and then melts and fades in a beam of the yet invisible sun.

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